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MY LIFE.

VOL. II.

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MY LIFE.

FROM 1815 TO 1849.

BY

CHARLES LOFTUS,
FORMERLY OF THE ROYAL NAVY,
LATE OF THE COLDSTREAM GUARDS.
AUTHOR OF
"MY YOUTH BY SEA AND LAND."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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MY LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

Yeomanry called out—Boat-racing—Pigeon-shooting—The Carrier Pigeon—Elise sent to School—Attempts to see her—Love laughs at Locksmiths—Death of Elise—Death of my Eldest Brother—A Fox-hunt—Exciting Scene—Necessity of a Standing Army—A Colonel of Volunteers—Annoying Circumstances—Dr. Guthrie's Treatment—Neglect to apply for a Pension.

IN the midst of all the gaieties going on, I received a letter from Lord James Townshend, Colonel of the Norfolk Rangers, begging me to come down to Yarrow, for they were to be out in two days' time. They were to assemble at Fakenham, as a riot was expected among the farm-labourers, on account of a horse-thrashing machine, which had been brought into Norfolk. I did not lose a moment, but took my departure with the least delay possible. Arriving

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at Fakenham late at night, I took a gig, and drove to Stiffkey, got all my clothes and accoutrements, had my old horse saddled and equipped, sent an order out to John Dunn to join, with his thorough-bred mare, and with two others, whom I had enlisted in Stiffkey, I again started for Fakenham. At eight o'clock the following morning, I found myself in the Market Place at the head of eighty good men and true, out of the hundred of which the corps consisted, and sent off an express to my uncle, telling him what I had done, while I awaited his orders. I desired the men to put up their horses, and be ready at bugle call to re-assemble. I lay down, and slept soundly. At ten o'clock Captain Dewing and my Colonel arrived, bringing in fifteen more men.

We remained inactive till six o'clock that evening, when the men were summoned, and marched to Hempton Green, where they were put through some manœuvres, to refresh their memory. At eight o'clock the officers sat down to a comfortable repast at the Crown Inn, kept by Joshua Ward, whose son was in the corps. We took advantage of being thus assembled,

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on account of the threats of a riot, caused by the arrival of a thrashing machine from the fens, in the neighbourhood of Lynn, to muster every morning, and go through the usual forms of military duty in the market-place, thus improving the discipline of the corps. Wishing to show the men what it was to halt on the march, we did so one day, on the way to Bircham, at Houghton, where, having obtained permission from the steward, we entered the Park, dismounted, and linked our horses. Every man having a haversack well stocked with cold meat, bread, biscuits, &c., they enjoyed their repast during a halt of two hours. We returned in the evening to Fakenham. As my Colonel thought it well to finish the eight days' training, now that we were out, application was made for permission to that effect, and it was granted.

At the expiration of our period of duty, no riot having occurred, we were inspected by a cavalry officer from Norwich. I felt very proud of the Rangers, with which little corps I had taken so much pains, and was elated by the praises I received for its efficiency, not only from him and my colonel, but from the Lord-

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Lieutenant also, who was present. As it was the King's birthday, we fired a *feu de joie*, and were dismissed.

On returning to London, I found that rowing on the Thames was much encouraged by all who were able and strong enough to enjoy the healthy exercise. A great feat was expected to come off. A certain number of the officers of the Guards had been backed for a large sum to row from Oxford to Westminster Bridge in sixteen hours, and this feat they performed with twenty minutes to spare. When it is considered with what a different description of boat from that of the present day it was performed, I think I may say that it was a gallant exploit; and my readers will remember that they had to get their boat through the different locks. My cousin, Harrington Hudson, was one of the rowers; Captain Blane, Captain Short, Colonel Standen, Edward Douglas, now Lord Penrhyn, and Captain Westnera, composed, I believe, the crew.

Pigeon-shooting came also much into fashion. Captain Ross, a first-rate shot, William Coke, well known in Leicestershire with the Quorn

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hounds, and Mr. Osbaldiston, with other gentlemen, were to be found at the Red House, where a supply of pigeons was always ready for all indulging in this description of sport. *I* never considered it to be *sport*, not because I myself was a bad shot, but because I felt it was a cruel action to place a pigeon in a box, pull a string which opened a door for him to fly out, and to shoot him the next moment. I have often since thought of the pretty song, "The Carrier Dove":—

> "Fly away to my native land, sweet dove,
> Fly away to my native land;
> And take these lines to my lady love,
> That I have traced with a feeble hand."

And when I reflect that all who read the Scriptures find the dove therein represented as the emblem of peace, I wonder, I confess, when I see the ruthless and unmeaning destruction of these harmless and pretty birds under the name of sport. My brother Ferrers, when a boy, reared several pigeons of different sorts—croppers, fantails, carriers, &c. Speaking of the carrier pigeon, it has been for centuries the trusted means of conveying rapidly information to friends far away. The bird is taken

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from the cage or the dovecot where it has been reared, and is sent, we will say, from London to Edinburgh, with a message fastened under the wing, in such a manner as not to impede its flight. The bird being fed there, will return to London with an answer. I do not know the mode of fastening, but I have seen many doves sent off. I remember coming from Antwerp to London many years ago, with a friend, who, on arriving at the wharf, brought to the deck a cage containing two beautiful carrier doves, with this message attached to each—"Nine o'clock—all's well." The birds flew upwards to an immense height, then wheeled in many circles, narrowing each circle—thus to escape the pounce of a bird of prey—and then darted off straight to their destination, where they would be fed.

On coming in to dinner one day, I found B——'s card, with his address at an hotel in Piccadilly, to which I repaired next morning, and found him at home. We had a long conversation, in the course of which I told him that I had two days previously received a letter from Elise's sister, telling me that the latter was gone

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to the seminary, and had sent me, through her, a description of the place, that I might the more easily find it, at the same time warning me that she was carefully watched; with a description of the two elderly *gouvernantes* of the house. We discussed the whole matter, and agreed to go the next day and reconnoitre the premises, which we did, and found the house to be in the exact position pointed out—a substantial gentlemanly residence fronting the road, with a garden of some extent at the back, fenced off by a high paling of oak planks from a path to the village on one side, on the other by a wall nine feet high, a fitting abode in which to keep watch and ward over young lovers. At the extreme end of the garden, a door in the wall led to the path by which they went to church, about half a mile distant. Through crevices in the paling I could see the whole length of a gravel walk, across a well-kept lawn, to a flight of steps leading to the door of the house, on the garden side. Having taken, as a sailor would say, "the bearings and distance" all round, we returned home, and I laid my plan of attack for the next evening.

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Setting out about six o'clock, I was on the spot in an hour, having written a letter to Elise, and enclosed it in a parcel, carefully secured. I attached it to a flat stone, which should carry it safely wherever I should fling it—a small bomb-shell falling into a school; but my readers will remember that I was a youth, and that poor "young love" was imprisoned on my account. With this in my pocket, I went very quietly up to the side of the paling, and looked through a crevice, but I neither saw nor heard anything; but the whistle of a baker's boy coming down the village path warned me to move on, to avoid observation. When the boy was out of sight, I took another peep, and, to my joy, saw the pretty figure of Elise walking alone up the path near the fence. She looked back at the house twice, and then advanced, with a book in her hand, as if reading, but she stood and listened. I think that even now I see her beautiful face opposite the spot where I stood. I lost not a moment, but pitching over my packet, it fell direct at her feet. She started, but in an instant picked it up, and with one kiss of her hand towards the paling, divining

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that I must be there, she ran like a fawn, swiftly, lightly up the path and into the house. I went away across the road to a small inn, so agitated that I took a small glass of brandy and water, and there I waited till it was nearly dark, when I returned to the oak fence, thinking that Elise might be able to come out again in the cool air, and bring me an answer, for I had said in my letter that I would whistle her favourite air, to show her where I could receive it. However, I had no opportunity of carrying out this plan, for although I saw her with her companions in the garden, and observed her looking round now and then, I feared to attract attention on her account, and I returned home to London.

The following day but one was Sunday, and I determined to see her at the church which she attended. Going there at eleven o'clock, I waited near the porch door, and saw five ladies coming down the path, Elise being one. She passed close to me, and we exchanged glances. I found a seat near theirs, where I could see her. I could, of course, hold no communication, but, as she had said, it would give her pleasure

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to see me, though not allowed to speak to me, I took this step to gratify her, although I cannot say that it was at all a satisfactory mode of proceeding.

In the following week I went three times out of town to see her, but failed each time, for she was not in the garden. The next Sunday found me again at her church, and I followed the party home. The duennas were both of them with Elise, and I passed them, pretending to outwalk them. I fancied that one of them looked very hard in my face, but this might be only the impression of my own consciousness. I had, nevertheless, a full opportunity of observing Elise, and scanning every feature of that lovely face, and it struck me sadly that she had a pale and melancholy expression. As our eyes met, hers told me painfully that she was unhappy. I resolved to run every risk to see her, if possible, to hear the truth of my fears. The next evening, therefore, I again repaired to the garden fence, and narrowly examined it, if, happily, I might discover a spot over which I could clamber, and hide myself among the shrubs; but I found that, in sur-

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mounting the top, I should be perceived either from the house, or by some one on the village path, or both. Being agile, however, and a sailor, I could climb anywhere, and I observed where the garden door opened I could rest my foot on its lower hinge, and draw myself up by the post on which the door hung, and drop myself down behind some full tall laurustinus.

The thing of importance was to choose a moment in which I could pass unperceived. I warily looked up and down the garden, but although I had laid my plan, and saw how it could be executed, I confess that I had not the resolution that evening to venture upon it. It was well that it was so. I found that, during my scrutiny, I could command the whole garden walk within, and be less perceived without, by standing close to the door, and looking through between it and the post; but I had scarcely completed my reconnaissance, when I heard footsteps, and keeping close to my friendly post, I peeped and saw Elise coming up the walk with a lady, her sister, both talking very earnestly together. As they came close to the door, intending to turn into the walk to

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their right, leading to the house, being certain of their identity, I whistled softly Elise's favourite song, "Wilt thou think of me, love, when I am far away?" I stood still and listened, and then heard her exclaim, "Oh! that's he!" Her sister came nearer, and I said, "It is I. How is she?"

"And how are you?" she answered.

"Pretty well. But I must see her," said I. "Can she be here at this time to-morrow alone? It is nearly dark now."

"Hush!" said she, "the old people are coming up the walk. Pray go away," and I strolled off, under cover of the fence, unseen.

The next evening I bent my way to the little inn, before the time I thought it would be safe to venture to the garden. I ordered some tea, and there I sat till the evening shadows began to lengthen. I then walked up the path, looking through the fence wherever there was an opening, but in vain, no one was in the garden. I passed the door, and strolled on towards the church. "And when I return," thought I, "I will scale the fortress!" Coming back, I perceived still that no one appeared. I put my

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foot on the door-hinge, my hands on the top of the post, and drew myself up, dropping down behind the laurustinus, my heart beating loudly. Sitting down there, I waited. Not a breath of wind stirred the leaves above me. All was still. I found that this was a good position for concealment, so thick was the shrub that anyone might pass and not discover me, while I could see the whole garden. It was a capital post of observation, and there I sat, not daring to emerge from my place of ambush, with growing impatience, for half an hour, thinking to myself how dull it was sitting behind that bush all alone. Another half hour passed away, but still no one seemed to stir in the place. Was she ill, or so closely watched as to fear making an attempt to come out? As these miserable thoughts passed through my mind, a drizzling rain came on, and with it vanished all my hopes. It was now quite dark, and the obscurity favoured my exit; and it was time, indeed, to make it, for I was cold and chilly with anxiety and disappointment. So I sprang back over the door-post, regained the inn, got my horse, and rode back briskly to London, greatly

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disheartened, unhappy about my poor Elise.

The next evening's post brought me a letter from her sister, begging me not to venture too rashly to see Elise, but to keep away both from the church and the house for some time; for if my presence was suspected, she might be removed thence, and some annoyance might also arise to me; for, with Argus eyes, one of the dames had remarked me in church, when I looked at Elise, and "wondered why I came there so often, and who I could be?"

A month dragged its slow length away, during which I neither heard nor saw anything of them. The season being nearly over in London, the time drew near when I should return to Norfolk. I made up my mind to know the worst—how she really was—and I wrote to my constant friend, her sister, confiding to her a little plan I had formed in my mind to enable me to see Elise again. It was this. I was a very fair and delicate-looking young man, with small features, hands, and feet, blue eyes, and, as I wore no whiskers then, I thought I might, dressed carefully as a lady, pass for one. "Nothing venture, nothing get." I com-

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municated my thoughts to two dear friends of mine, a young married pair, who had themselves passed through many difficulties in their love affairs, and they kindly interested themselves greatly in mine. It was proposed that they should dress me in the lady's dress, and take me as their friend in their carriage, and leave me at the door, drive away, and call for me again, under the pretext that I was a cousin of Elise, calling to see her. All this I wrote to her sister, proposing that Elise, on the following Sunday, should affect illness, and remain at home, alone. The reply, sadly enough, told me that she *was* ill, and had been unable to go to church for some time; that they were much alarmed at my proposed attempt; that they deemed it very imprudent, but they did not forbid it.

On the Saturday after I dined with my friends, and tried on my dress, a dark brown silk, buttoned up to the throat, and fitting me to admiration. Some fair ringlets I had procured, as for a masquerade, a straw bonnet, with a white veil, which I was instructed how to wear gracefully, and a pelerine, frilled at the throat; a

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pair of lavender gloves, and parasol completed my costume, under which I wore white trousers, tied up above the ankle, so as not to be seen, white silk stockings, with ladies' buttoned boots —and a very pretty pair they were. All this preparation was completed in my friend's dressing-room, superintended by his wife and her maid, who was enchanted at my metamorphosis, for a masquerade (so common in those days), as she thought; and when I practised walking into the drawing-room as Miss T——, the laugh at my expense was greater than I can describe—each declaring that the deception was perfect.

During the greater part of this season, one of my sisters and her family being with my father, his house was full, and I had two rooms in Great Marylebone Street, close by, and dined in Wimpole Street every day, an arrangement which much facilitated this little plot.

On Sunday morning I rose early and repaired to my friends, with whom I breakfasted. The carriage was ordered to the door at ten o'clock, and I demurely walked into it, carefully holding my dress. When in the carriage, sitting opposite to, and surveying me from time to time

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approvingly, my friend, to the intense amusement of his wife, declared "that I was such a charming young lady, he had a great mind to fall in love with me himself!" while I, poor I, was not in love with myself at all, but sat there with rather a faint heart at what I had undertaken, and thinking how, if discovered, Elise might suffer; but "faint heart ne'er won fair lady," it is said. However, it was a quarter to eleven when we arrived near to the house; and making sure that, by that time, the party must be gone to church, my friend directed his coachman to drive up to the hall door, where I almost said I would not go any further. My friend, however, opening the door of the carriage, jumped out and rang the bell. A maid-servant answered it, and he inquired if Miss —— was at home—that if so, a lady wished to see her.

"Yes," she was within, and he handed me, with due deference, out of the carriage and up the steps, with a look of witty intelligence I shall never forgot as he said,

"We shall call for you, Miss T——, in a quarter of an hour."

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I bowed, and was ushered along a passage and shown into a handsome, well-furnished apartment. I fancied that the maid eyed me scrutinizingly. My veil was down. I daresay in that dress I looked taller than I really was, nearly five feet eight inches. On leaving me in the room she asked,

"What name, if you please, miss, shall I say?"

I had forgotten this, not wishing to speak, for fear my voice should betray me, but now I said, "Miss T——." I then sat down on a sofa, and the maid disappeared. In a few minutes I heard a step and a rustling in the passage, the door opened, and in she came, poor dear!—yes, my own Elise, so changed, so deadly pale! I rose to meet her as she gently closed the door behind her, took her hand and drew her to my side. She leant her face on my shoulder, and burst into tears. Then, a little recovering herself and looking up, as I tried to re-assure her, she exclaimed, "Oh! what have you done?" and "Oh! dear, dear, how wonderfully *well* you have done it! I should have known your face anywhere, but no one else would do so," and

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then another sob, and half hysterically she began to laugh. All that I could do was to try to soothe and calm this agitation, to press her fondly to my heart, and impress many a kiss on her fair cheek, which was as fondly returned. She recovered her self-command, evidently difficult to maintain from physical weakness, which it grieved and alarmed me to perceive. She had feared the governess had seen me at church; she had watched us both. I found that her health was indeed suffering; still we resolved to wait and see what the fates had in store for us. She promised faithfully she would write to me, and this promise she as faithfully kept to the last. A ring at the door-bell disturbed our happiness. The servant entered to say "that the lady had called for Miss T——," and Elise, looking at her watch, thought I had better go. We took our last and parting kiss, our last fond look—for it was our last. Our last words were of mutual love and confidence in each other, but I never saw her more—never again heard her sweet voice, though her parting words were assurances of her

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perfect trust in me. In three months my poor Elise was no more.

I returned with my friends, too deeply affected by all that had passed for words, and they were kind enough to ask me no questions. When I came home and told B—— of my melancholy visit, he fully sympathised in all the difficulties of the case on both sides. Had it pleased Heaven to permit our union, with so sweet a disposition as hers, she so unselfish, so honourable and well educated, I am sure that, fully appreciating her and her unselfish devotion to me, I should have been very happy with her. It was not to be. I told this sad story to a dear cousin of mine, long since passed away. To others it was totally unknown. How often have I reflected sadly upon this passage in my life! So conscious and assured am I of the devoted affection of this amiable and beautiful being that, had we been united, I feel sure that the events of my life would have been very different; for I know that I should have received encouragement from her and through her family to follow up my profession and rise in it, which assistance I never did receive, for,

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although I ultimately became blind, it was years before that misfortune quite disabled me.

The better part of my stay in London this Summer was occupied in the usual routine of gaiety. The opera I never failed to visit on Tuesdays and Saturdays, and having friends who sent me tickets, it cost me little or nothing to attend at my favourite resort; but I was not unmindful of the state of health in which I found my eldest brother, who was at that time in command of one of the battalions of the Coldstream Guards then quartered in London. He had been all the Winter complaining; and though he was out with his gun when down in Norfolk, still I could perceive that he was far from being in a good state of health. Towards the end of June, whilst in London, he was totally unable to attend to any military duties; and the surgeons advised him to go back to the country, in the hope that the bracing air of Norfolk would restore him to his usual strength. He travelled down to Stiffkey with a good and faithful servant, and I also took my departure, according to my father's wish, to take care of him, joining him at my father's house.

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For some days after our arrival he began, as I hoped, to recover, but I was sorry, at the end of a fortnight, to find that he had relapsed into his former state, and before I could get my father down from London, he expired. He laid his head upon my shoulder, and breathed his last.

I had sent up to London an express, in hopes that my father could come down, as I saw he was sinking fast; but, alas! he came too late. My brother was buried in Raynham Church, not far from my dear mother's vault; and visiting that place last Summer, I laid my hand on the tombstones of many departed relatives. In the rear of my poor brother's was that of his old and faithful servant, who had accompanied him to South America in Whitelock's unfortunate expedition.

But I will dwell upon this melancholy subject no longer. High and low, rich and poor, we must all bend before the Will of God: "Dust we are, and unto dust we must return;" and happy that man who is prepared to meet his fate when it pleases the Good and Merciful Being to call him away from this world!

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I remained in the country till the expiration of this year (1823), during which time I visited many friends. As I have stated, I had sold my old horse, and had bought another from a farmer at Cockthorpe—a little, dark chestnut mare, who turned out a first-rate jumper, and was very fast.

During the hunting season, one day I was mounted on this little mare, and repaired to Melton Hall to meet the hounds. We had drawn Hildoveston Wood, and some adjoining covers blank, and then trotted away to a cover not far from the Hall, outside the Park, towards Fulmondeston. I was standing outside the cover with the Honourable George Mills, afterwards Lord Sondes; the hounds had been in cover some time, and the horn at last was blowing them away on the other side, when, to our astonishment, a fine fox, with a beautiful brush, broke away close to us. Lord Sondes held up his hand to me as a sign not to speak. The fox was so close that I could see his eye turned up at us, but we neither spoke nor moved till he was away across the field, and over the next fence, out of sight. We then

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gave the view-halloa, and the cry of "Gone away!" which was instantly responded to by the horn, while the huntsman came back full gallop with the hounds.

"Whereabouts, sir?" he asked.

Lord Sondes pointed to the spot. The hounds were instantly laid on, and away they went, the whole field galloping after them, some one way, some another. No time having been lost, the scent was brilliant. I think, when you see the hounds topping the fences, and giving tongue at the same time, while gentlemen are riding at the fences full of pluck and courage, it is a wonderfully exciting sight, and one in which I greatly delighted. I hardly can tell what places we went through, but, after a run for thirty minutes as hard as we could gallop, over hedge and ditch as they came in our way, I found myself, with Sir Jacob Astley, Mr. Mills, the huntsman, and the two whips, close to Mr. Upchers at Sherringham.

Here we came to a check, and were joined by two other gentlemen; but in two minutes we were off again. Without a check, we ran straight towards the cliff overlooking the sea

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about half a mile from Cromer, where the fox had an earth in the most difficult place to get at, for it was half-way down the cliff, and here, after a capital run of sixteen miles, we whipped off. I was pleased with my little mare, and rode home quite contented with my day's sport. Of course there were several falls, horses loose, "bellows to mend," during the run. I remember one old fat fellow whom I passed on the road, mopping his head in a state of perspiration. "Lawk a mercy, sir, I wish I was as light as yow (you). How yow do ride!"

I used to pay an occasional visit and stay a day or two at Gunthorp Hall, the residence of an old friend who was rector and squire of the parish, a most hospitable gentleman, at whose house I met several friends long since departed from this world. At the death of the Reverend Mr. Collier, this property, being for sale, was bought by a son of the Bishop of Ely, the Reverend Mr. Sparkes, with whom I likewise lived on terms of great friendship for many years. He had married a sister of Sir Jacob Astley, who kept the hounds. He had two sons, one of whom

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was killed in the famous Balaclava charge in the Crimean war; famous it certainly was, for it showed the courage and pluck of the English officers, and the brave men who followed them; but it was a foolish undertaking; in the words of the French general who witnessed it—"C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la guerre." It is distressing to think of brave men led on by some unaccountable blunder of their leader without the slightest hope of attaining any good result. In the circumstances it was almost fortunate that the regiments were mere skeletons, for the six altogether did not number more than six hundred men. When the 12th Lancers and 10th Hussars came from India, the French said, "These *are* two cavalry regiments, but the only two the English have got;" and that remark was a perfectly true one. Our men went out to the Crimea under 300 strong to each regiment, and not more than 250 horses. And what was that owing to? To the unwise system of not keeping an army to take the field when wanted, and I fear such will be the case again if we are called to the field at the present moment, an event

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not at all improbable. However, I am not unaware of the fact that it is very hard to please everyone. The great economists are much against a standing Army; but they may talk as they please, we cannot do without one.

Staying a few years back at a gentleman's house in Cheshire, he said—"There is a man coming to dine with me to-day who commands the Manchester Volunteers. I wish you would just tackle him if he begins upon the subject, as he is sure to do, of a standing Army."

It happened just as my friend expected. The Colonel of Volunteers was a great liberal politician, as I soon found out from his conversation. After the ladies had withdrawn, some gentleman observed (and I think it was done on purpose to get a rise out of the gallant Colonel) that it was a grand thing to find how well the Volunteer movement had succeeded.

"Oh, yes," said the Colonel of the Manchester battalion, "we want no regular Army, sir, with such a movement as this. What is the use of those Guards in London?—what an enormous expense they are kept up at!"

I turned round and said, "They are kept up

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to save you and others from a foreign power, and to maintain the honour and glory of the English nation."

I then asked him what would become of our foreign possessions without a standing army, mentioning several places, such as Malta, Gibraltar, Canada, &c., &c.

"Gibraltar and Malta, sir," he said, "why, we don't want them at all."

"Will you be prepared with your Volunteers to go and garrison those places?"

"Oh, dear, we were not intended for that," he said.

"No," I said, "I don't think you were."

Of course this argument created great amusement amongst us all, particularly as nearly all present had served in the Army, in India, &c. I don't think the Manchester "cit" was quite aware of this, and I only mention this story to show what extraordinary ideas prevail among some classes of Her Majesty's subjects.

The Winter season over, which we had all passed together at Stiffkey, we went, as usual, to London. I attended a good fancy ball in

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the Argyle Rooms, given by Mrs. Prideaux Brune—a splendid affair. I wore my full-dress uniform of the old Coldstream. I met some of my former companions, who all wished that I would rejoin my regiment. I cannot say that I enjoyed that season at all. Some circumstances occurred which deeply annoyed and hurt me—more than I can express; and I made up my mind that I would marry the first amiable person who liked me, and would settle in the country.

Worse than this, I again suffered from another and rather severe attack of inflammation in my only remaining eye, which, under Guthrie's skilful management, though his treatment was rather severe, was subdued. He again urged upon me to apply for a pension, saying that he was ready to come forward and prove that I had lost the other eye through the painful accident which befell me while in the Navy, and that the suffering I now endured was the result of the same calamity. But I let the time slip by, till all those who could have backed my application for a pension, are, I fear, long since gone.

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CHAPTER II.

Paul Benfield—*Punch*—Race of Geese and Turkeys—Raynham Hall—My Marriage—Sir Charles Clarke—Agricultural and Pastoral Pursuits—Norfolk Dumplings—Agricultural Unions—The English Poor-Laws—Rev. Mr. Pretyman's Pamphlet—Royal Inspection of the Norfolk Militia—Saluting the Wrong Man—Black Stag-Hounds—Game-Laws.

THE season over, I thought of returning to Norfolk. I usually went in the morning to see the horses of Paul Benfield, at Barlett's livery stables in Oxford Street. I had no horse of my own in town, and I occasionally hired one, but if Paul was aware that I required a steed, he mounted me on a little short-set, well-bred cob, under fifteen hands, a great favourite with his master, which would go in harness, and do anything required of him. This little nag, "Punch," was well known in Norfolk and Leicestershire for some years. With my light weight, he would keep up with the best horses in

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the field. He could jump any fence, and the more intricate it was, the more cleverly did he manage it. He would leap over a stiff fence, creep down the most difficult places, jump in and out a double post and rail, or take a five-barred gate, if I permitted, which I seldom did. His master made me a present of "Punch." In Leicestershire I was offered a hundred guineas for a horse which was originally bought of a Berkshire farmer for thirty pounds, and him I rode, in company with a Norfolk gentleman, into that county.

On our way over Newmarket Heath, this gentleman observed,

"This is the spot where the great race between two noble lords of our county took place."

"What race?" I asked.

"Oh! not a race between them, or a horse race either. I mean that between an equal number of geese and turkeys."

"I heard something of that," I said. "How was it done?"

"One of the noblemen made a bet that he would drive a certain number of geese to Lon-

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don in a shorter time than the other could the same number of turkeys."

The challenge was accepted, and they started fair, each party with a boy and a wand, to guide the birds. Large bets were made in favour of the turkeys, who went ahead, far beyond the geese, the first day. From Swaffham to Brandon is a flat country, and they were to go by Barton Mills across to Newmarket. Arriving at Brandon, fifteen miles, the turkeys took to roosting on gates, posts, rails, or in low branches. A river between Brandon and the Heath attracted the geese, and in they plunged, with delight to themselves, but to the grief of their driver. But with plenty of help from other boys, and the counter-attraction of corn on one side of the water, they were brought out again. The landlord of the "Chequers Inn," having made a bet in their favour, gathered the geese into a shed, and rested them there till three in the morning, when they started afresh, their opponents, the turkeys, still ahead, and so they remained till passing Barton Mills, where they again flew anywhere to roost. The noble lord who had backed

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the geese, having slept at "The Chequers," and heard of their taking the water at Brandon, went forward, and procured a large trough of water, and had it placed on the road for their solace. The turkeys, to the great dismay of their driver, began to roost very early in the day. But the geese, more wise, went gabbling along, steadily pursuing their course. The great thing was to get them forward during the night, poor birds, to head the turkeys, and this was cleverly accomplished, the latter being left asleep on the perch at Barton Mills.

On arriving at Newmarket, the geese were ahead, but greatly fatigued, and they were again housed with plenty of fresh straw, water, and corn, starting once more at daylight. But the turkeys, being also early birds, had nearly overtaken them between Newmarket and Bourne Bridge. At Chesterford the geese were still ahead. The turkeys, poor things, had diminished in numbers, their conductor losing some while they were roosting. On arriving at Lord Braybroke's, where many gentlemen were assembled, the bet was considered to be won by the geese, as it had been arranged between the noblemen

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that he whose flock should reach London in the largest number should be the winner of the bet.

Thus ended this very droll experiment. From the windows of Lord Braybroke's mansion, the party assembled had a full view of the London road running through the domain. The race was terminated out of compassion for the birds' fatigue. It created a great interest and amusement in the country.

An occurrence took place in 1825 which generally changes the whole current of a man's life. I was married. An officer whom I had known in the Guards—a very good-natured fellow, who was fond of shooting, hunting, &c., like myself—had come into Norfolk with his father and mother, the former a great sportsman and first-rate shot. Raynham Hall, the seat of my grandfather, was, according to the will of Lord Leicester, his eldest son, who became Marquis of Townshend at the death of his father, to belong to my cousin, Lord Charles, at the expiration of twenty-one years, during which time the Hall, manors, &c., were to be let. There being magnificent shooting on this estate, and a fine old mansion to reside in,

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Colonel Dixon (the father of my friend) hired the Hall of the trustees, and came to reside there. I used to go over and shoot at Raynham, and stay two or three days at a time.

General the Honourable William Fitzroy, who lived at Kempstone Lodge, kept a small pack of harriers, and Colonel Dixon's youngest daughter and Lady Elizabeth Fitzroy being fast friends, they used to ride out together with these harriers, and I often went with them. The consequence was that we were thrown much together, and, to make a long story short, I subsequently married Colonel Dixon's youngest daughter, who was a splendid horsewoman. A small cottage residence, known as Dunham Cottage, within three miles of Lady Elizabeth's mansion, offered a great inducement for us to reside near such kind friends, and consequently we hired it in April, 1825, and I think, without exception, it was one of the most comfortable and cheap residences I ever had. There was a capital kitchen garden, an orchard, and a piece of ground attached to it, upon which I used to grow between thirty and forty sacks of potatoes a year.

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Facing the south was a very pretty flower-garden, into which we walked from the house. An old rustic bridge passed over a ditch by which a field of five acres of good pasture-land was divided from the garden. The house was an old-fashioned one, the drawing-room and dining-room on the same floor, with a small apartment which I made use of as a dressing-room. Overhead were five bedrooms, and an attic for a man-servant's room. On the ground-floor were kitchen, scullery, pantry, larder, and wood-house. Connected with the house were a four-stall stable, coach-house, coal-hole, &c. Over the stable was a granary which would hold a ton of hay in trusses, and all this I hired for the sum of thirty pounds a year.

Having furnished our small residence, and brought my horses and everything over to it, it was not very long before we got everything into a comfortable state. Although I had every convenience which a man of small fortune could desire, still there was one thing which I felt as a great loss, and of this I became aware after I had left my dear father's house—the want of shooting ground.

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Sir Charles Clarke, the famous physician, well known among the aristocracy of London, resided close to me, having some years previously purchased Dunham Lodge, a substantial, well-built house, with about four hundred acres of land attached to it, as well as three or four large farms in the parish of Little Dunham, belonging to others. Sir Charles had the exclusive privilege of shooting, a privilege with which, of course, I could not interfere. However, as the old song says—

> "There's a sweet little cherub who sits up aloft,
> And watches o'er the fate of poor Jack,"

and he came to me one day, in the shape of a farmer, who was walking towards Swaffham, about four miles from Dunham, and, apologising for his intrusion, said that, as I was living in his neighbourhood, he hoped that I would shoot over his farm of three hundred acres whenever I pleased, as he understood that I had no shooting at Little Dunham, adding that he much respected me and all my family. Of course, I could but thank him for his kind-hearted and generous offer, and on inquiring to whom I was indebted for it, he informed me

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that his father had held for many years a farm on the Raynham estate, and that he himself now occupied a farm at Newton, near Castleacre, which adjoined the property of Captain Davey, of the Royal Navy. This led me to inquire about the land contiguous to his; and finding that Mr. Fountain, of Narford Hall, had a farm joining that of Captain Davey, I soon ascertained that it was possible to get the shooting of all the land on the other side of Little Dunham, so as not to interfere with Sir Charles Clarke's, about two thousand acres in all.

I sent, on May 1st, my three horses to grass in Raynham Park. It was the fashion in those days to turn horses out to grass in the Summer. Sometimes this plan did not answer; but I was generally fortunate. The horses came back in good order, and their feet were wonderfully benefited by standing in the river and in the grass in the hot days. It is not a practice, however, to be recommended in all circumstances. It was a curious thing to watch the horses and cattle out at grass, as I have done while fishing in the river, into which the lake emptied

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itself. The horses would be grouped together, and Punch generally seemed to be "master of the field." They had no shoes on their hind feet; the fore feet were well pared down, there were tips on the toes, and they were all overlooked by the blacksmith once in two weeks. I also bought two bullocks, and turned them into a park, which was hired at that time from Mr. Diggins of the Shereford Farm, who pastured stock at so much a head. One of my bullocks disappeared on one occasion for days, and no one could make out where it had strayed; but we discovered that he had been the victim of a strange misadventure. Close to the kitchen wood, a plantation to the right of the Hall, was the ice-house, above which was a clump of fir-trees shading it. A carpenter had been at work, and left the outer door ajar, and a heavy thunderstorm one day scattered the cattle in all directions. My bullock, frightened like the rest, must have pushed against the door, which giving way, he got in, but could not get out again. Diggins, as he rode round the Park, observing the door to be ajar, dismounted to pull it to, meaning to get

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the key and fasten it, when he heard something move within, and, looking in, to his amazement there was the bullock. He was obliged to take the door off the hinges before he could liberate the animal, after his three days' incarceration.

As soon as the shooting season began we went over to Stiffkey, and happy was I to find myself again in the dear old place. I walked through the shrubbery up to the mount, and looked thence at the marshes, the sea, Blakeney Harbour, all which recalled to my mind the scenes of boyhood. Here my dear mother would sit and read to us boys, and we would run races down one side and up the other. There was not a tree or shrub which did not recall happier days. We remained about a month here. My brother Frederick was then at home on leave from his regiment, the 17th Lancers. On our way home we stayed at Pinkney Hall, at that time occupied by Sir Bladen and Lady Capel. Here I met Arthur Capel, formerly of the Life Guards (now Lord Essex) and Lady Caroline, and I had some good partridge shooting for a week.

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My horses having been got up from grass, I turned my attention to getting them in order. At that time horses were kept at one half the expense they now are; in fact, in those days everything was far more reasonably procured. Butcher's meat, of the best quality, was bought at sevenpence a pound, as good as is now got for one shilling and twopence; bacon at about fourpence, now a shilling. For one shilling we could purchase eighteen or twenty eggs, now sold at the rate of one shilling and eightpence the dozen. Servants' wages and food were much less expensive, in Norfolk particularly so. Everyone liked the famed Norfolk dumpling, so beautifully light, frothy, and delicious, which it would puzzle our finest cooks at twenty-five guineas a year now to make. No dinner was thought complete without it. I used to visit at the house of one of the oldest families in Norfolk, and at dinner the first dish placed at the bottom of the table was one of silver, full of these dumplings, about the size of Bath buns, and, of course, with them a silver boat of hot gravy, which, in the farmhouses, they saved from the goose to eat with it. The farm-labourers were

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generally boarded in the house in those days, and I remember while shooting in September on a farm at Sporle in a wet season, the harvest being late, I took shelter from a shower of rain in a farmhouse, into which the men were going to their dinner at one o'clock. The farmer asked me to go and look at the men at their dinner. There were fourteen or fifteen stout fellows sitting at a long table with an enormous dish of dumplings at the bottom, while a round of beef graced the top. Before this, with a large knife and fork in his hand, was the clerk of the parish, the foreman of the harvest, sharpening his knife on the fork. He looked at the master of the house with a sort of grin I can never forget. "Master," he said, "does not this go to your heart?" which, of course, *it did*, for he had been feeding these fellows at that rate for fourteen days, and probably as many more would elapse before their work was finished. All this has since been changed. The men are paid so much for the harvest-time and find their own provisions, and the harvest is more quickly got up; but the demands of the labourers are something frightful, and this system has been

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brought about by revoluntionary demagogues, encouraged by secret societies in the north of England and elsewhere, sending out stump orators.

When I was in Norfolk last year, an esquire, who farmed about four hundred acres of his own property, and who had men in his employment who had worked for his father years before, told me that his head man came once to speak to him, and told him that he had received a letter from the union in Yorkshire, desiring him to work no longer for his present wages, but, with the rest of the men, strike for more money.

His master replied, "Just as you please. I know nothing of your union, and I care nothing for it; if it will take care of you, pray go and work under the union, I shall give you no higher wages. Just allow me to ask you, do you pay any rent for your cottage and your garden?"

"No, yer honour."

"Do any of the men on my farm?"

"No, yer honour."

"And generally do you not get a pig from

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me in the year, and as many sacks of potatoes as you wish off the land? And if any of your family are sick or ill, are they not taken care of and provided with medicine and attendance, soup twice a week from my own kitchen during all the Winter months, and whenever they are unwell?"

"Yes, yer honour."

"Well, if the union will do better for you, pray go."

The man scratched his head, and looked very foolish.

"Well, yer honour, I think this is all quite true, and that we'd better have nothing to do with 'unions.'"

"And I think so, too," said the Squire. And he heard no more of it.

The questions this gentleman asked of his labourer, I know from personal experience, demonstrate the nature of the general treatment which the labourers of Norfolk received formerly, and still receive, from the nobility and gentry, and the farmers, the occupiers of their land, in that county, and, I may say, generally throughout England; and it is nothing but the

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vile principles of secret and disloyal societies, disseminated by such orators as I have described, which disturb the peace of the country. They would gladly plunge it into anarchy and confusion, setting one class against the other, while deceiving the ignorant and uninformed by promises (which they themselves know can never be fulfilled), and all this for the sake of their petty party purposes.

It is impossible to exaggerate the baneful effects of the "Unions" and "strikes," causing *dis*union between masters and employed. I should like to draw the attention of some of my readers to a clever work lately published by a great friend of mine, the Rev. John Pretyman, entitled "Dispauperisation," upon the subject of the Poor Laws. In this book he plainly shows the failure of the Poor Law Bill, from which so much good was anticipated. In this work occurs the following passage, p. 20 :—

"'Pourquoi,' writes an intelligent French gentleman, 'dans l'Angleterre si riche, y-a-t'il tant de pauvres?' In order to reduce this mass of poverty, and elevate the condition of these classes in social and moral respects, various

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methods are tried." And he enumerates a number of excellent societies, such as those for better dwellings, wholesome houses, organization of charity, penny readings, free libraries, museums, reading-rooms at the public expense—for the improvement of the *moral* condition of the people; and alms-houses, soup-kitchens, hospitals, homes, and refuges for the sick and infirm of the poor. Then he asks, "Why have all these benevolent methods been attended with so little success, as is generally known? Simply because they do not touch the root of the evil. *What*, then, is *the root?* Everyone who has considered the subject, *knows* that the root of the evil *is their conspicuous improvidence.* In this habit they notoriously exceed the populations of all other civilized countries. Nay, they so far even return to that state of barbarism in which men, according to a well-known description—'Nec componere opes nôrant nec parcere parto,' that they have no notion of laying by their means, or of husbanding their gains, but live from hand to mouth."

And in this manner of life I myself believe they will continue, as long as the ill-judged

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system of giving out-door relief is persevered in, and scarcely any will think of working or laying by for the support of an aged parent, while they themselves are able-bodied men. In Sweden and in Norway examples of the evil effects of supplying able-bodied men with money, when out of work, have caused a total alteration in their Poor Law.

I am very glad to see, in a London paper, lately, that a London magistrate, inquiring into the case of an aged man, told his son, a young fellow in good health, who was receiving excellent wages, and had but one child to support, besides his wife and himself, yet repeatedly refused to contribute anything towards the support of an aged father, that he should be obliged to do so, and reprimanded him for his heartlessness in leaving his father in the union, when he could at least give him some help—a reprimand which, uttered in open Court, is, I trust, calculated to produce a beneficial effect.

When speaking of the Norfolk Militia, I ought to have recorded an anecdote told by my father. During the war between France and England, which raged up to 1815, all the militia

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regiments in England and Ireland were embodied. A great many Irish regiments came here, and as many English regiments were sent there—one of Pitt's able moves. Lord Townshend, who was Lord-Lieutenant of Norfolk, and Colonel of the militia, was told by the King, George III., that he should like to see the Norfolk Militia out, previous to their embarkation for Ireland. At that time there was a considerable camp of troops assembled in Essex, principally composed of the militia. The Norfolk regiment was marched to London, and drawn up in Hyde Park for His Majesty's inspection. The loyal feeling prevailing in England induced the gentry of those days to adopt the profession of arms in some division of the service, and consequently the regiments were officered by their own county gentlemen. One of these officers, commanding a company, was Captain Wyndham, of Felbrigg Hall, near Cromar, a family which has distinguished itself both by sea and land. The gallant captain had a passion for farming, and it was often observed that he was in a thoughtful mood during drill. One day it was remarked by the adjutant that, in

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marching past the Colonel in open order, he did so sometimes without saluting. On the day of inspection, before the King arrived on the ground, Lord Townshend called Wyndham to him, and said, in his good-natured way,

"Now, Wyndham, be sure not to forget to salute to-day, in marching past the King, as I observe you often omit doing so to me; but I do not care about that, I know you are thinking of your turnips!"

"No, my lord; I promise you I will not forget."

The time came. His Majesty arrived, and after riding down the line and up the rear, took his post at the flag-staff for the march past, followed by his staff, of which my father was one. The Colonel, of course, came past first in front of the leading column, saluted, and drew up by the side of the King. All went on well, till the 6th company (Wyndham's) wheeled, and came to open order, when Wyndham was observed to come down to the salute before he arrived near the King, recover his sword, and march past His Majesty without taking the slightest notice of him. The King, observing this,

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said quickly, "Lord Townshend—Lord Townshend, there's one officer gone by without saluting. Who is that—*who* is that?" The Colonel, horrified, hardly knew what to say.

After the review, when the King had left the ground, the Colonel rode up to the unfortunate captain, and said,

"Well, Wyndham, you *have* done the thing to-day, certainly!"

"I am glad, Colonel, you approve—I told you I would not forget."

"Approve?—not forget?—you passed the King and never took the slightest notice of him, never saluted at all!"

"Never saluted at all! I'll take my oath, my lord, I did!"

"You will take a wrong oath, for you passed the King and never took the slightest notice of His Majesty."

"I'll take my oath, my lord, I did!"

"I saw you come down and salute at the wrong place, the moment that you had wheeled!"

"The wrong place, my lord! I saw him as

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clearly as I see you now—he had G. R. on his breast. I could not be mistaken."

This was a little too much for the Colonel, who could keep his countenance no longer, but rode away intensely amused in despite of his annoyance, as was likewise the King when informed by Lord Townshend, after dinner, that poor Wyndham, seeing one of the Beefeaters of the Guard, with a big G. R. on his breast, saluted *him* for his King, quite assured of doing the right thing—a joke which His Majesty greatly enjoyed.

Among the neighbours residing near me, were Colonel and Mrs. Keppel, the latter a dear friend of my mother. At Swaffham, also, resided Miss Hammond, who had a considerable property, a good house and stables, was a capital horsewoman, and rode well to hounds. Her brother, who lived with her, had three thousand a year of his own, and was kind and good to the poor. He was an excellent and very handsome man. He rode well, and kept a magnificent pack of staghounds, originally from Jamaica, and as black as a coal. With these I had many a good

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run. The red deer for hunting were kept like the horses, tied by the head in stalls, and fed on oats, beans, and hay, and tremendous runs twice in the week did they give us.

In the first week of November that year, we went out with General Fitz-Roy's harriers on Litcham Heath. There I made the acquaintance of the Reverend James Hoste, who held the living of Litcham. He was a most agreeable companion, being clever, very good-natured, and one of the best mimics I ever saw. He was brother of Sir William and Sir George Hoste, two gallant officers who nobly served their country during the war. Sir William fought the gallant action off Lissa, and captured the French frigate with his small squadron. It is a curious thing that there were three brothers Hostes, "a host in themselves," in this action; the youngest a boy serving as a midshipman. Sir George, an officer in the Royal Artillery, was bound, I believe, for Malta, and took his passage in his brother's frigate, I think the *Amphion*, in which he was of much service in laying and directing the quarter-deck guns.

In my former work, in speaking of the wild

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duck shooting at Raynham and Stiffkey, I omitted to say that on the former estate in the open was to be found the bustard. They seemed especially fond of frequenting a spot called Kipton Heath, and they were annually bred in the vicinity of the Rudham Grange Farm, or on the Coxford Lodge Farm, where the heather resembles that of Scotland. My grandfather turned out Scotch grouse there, and for a season or so they bred, and would have done well, but for the destructive propensity of poaching and stealing eggs, which prevails so much among the lower classes, and for which children are seldom reproved by their parents; but, on the contrary, are encouraged to bring home all they can find.

When a boy, I often went out to try and shoot a bustard, which is a wary bird, but I never succeeded. The rifle in those days was not used as now, or these birds would not have remained so long as they did at Raynham. Mr. Hammond, of Swaffham, stuffed birds of all descriptions most beautifully, and he had made a fine collection of bustards—among others a fine male bird he had shot on Kipton Heath.

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These birds have entirely disappeared off the estate, and it is my opinion, in despite of all that Liberals can say, that if the game-laws were annulled by any ministry, to court popularity with those who have no property in land, or with the mobility, and to procure votes in Parliament, there would not be a single head of game in England in a few years' time. I claim the right of every man to do as he pleases with his own property, and not to be dictated to by those who have none.

We were at Stiffkey, to meet my brother Ferrers, who, in 1826, came from London to join in the partridge shooting. We had capital sport the next day; when dinner was over the post-bag came in, with a letter containing an immediate order for him to join his battalion (the Grenadiers), which, with one of the Coldstream and one of the Fusilier Guards, was ordered to embark for Portugal. There was something not amicable just then passing between the French and Portuguese, and it was supposed that the former would make an attempt to enter Portugal, and get possession of Lisbon. But the Prime Minister, Mr. Canning, was too quick for them.

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I drove my brother to Fakenham, whence he posted to London, and in two days the brigade of Guards, with other regiments, was *en route*, with cavalry and artillery, down the Channel for the Tagus. I remember Mr. Canning's speech on two occasions. The first was in 1823, and it created roars of laughter in the House. He so good-naturedly, and yet ludicrously, described a noble lord in the full dress of the Light Horse Volunteers of Buckinghamshire, setting out to embark for Spain, taking his place by the Falmouth mail, which, when he sat down, showed by its swing on one side, and the creaking of its springs, that he was no *light* weight! The second was in the year 1826, upon the embarkation of troops for Portugal—a very memorable address. The Guards went from Sheerness on the 15th December, and arrived in the Tagus on the 25th, Christmas Day.

In this year we paid our first visit to Edmondthorpe Hall, near Market Oreton, and about nine miles from Melton Mowbray, which place my wife's eldest brother, Captain Henry Dixon, had hired for hunting. Not more than five miles

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from Cotsmore, Lord Lonsdale resided, and kept the well known pack of that name. He was indeed a specimen of the good English nobleman, and I have every reason to speak of him as such, for he was invariably kind and attentive to us. Lady Lonsdale and Lady Eleanor Lowther used to hunt in scarlet habits, with a hat, and a small feather along the brim, producing a very pretty effect, especially as they were both handsome. My wife, who rode well, and I, often went to Cotsmore to stay when the hounds hunted near. The gentlemen belonging to the Quorn and the Cotsmore Hunt always dined in scarlet coats, lined with white silk, and adorned with plain gilt buttons—all in good taste. Of course I had to provide myself with such a costume when I went into the country. In Norfolk we could do well in white corduroys, but here it was white leather, and well made, too, or we should be reckoned "snobs" from the provinces.

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CHAPTER III.

Visit to Leicestershire—Hard Riding—A Boat on a New Plan—Boat Racing on the Thames—Spread of very Liberal Notions—Equality—Farmer Johnson—A Subscription Pack of Fox-Hounds—An Unruly Horse subdued—Swapping Horses—Incendiarism in Kent—Fires in Norfolk and Suffolk—Alarming State of the Country.

THE following year, 1827, I went again into Leicestershire, driving Punch and the bay mare, and arrived at Edmondthorpe in two days. Here I found hunting going on as before. I paid a visit to my old friend, Paul Benfield, for a week at Leicester. He had a beautiful stable, and six fine hunters, which he could not ride, for a cold which he neglected had fallen upon his lungs and laid him up. On returning to Edmondthorpe, my brother-in-law informed me that he had bought a new horse, for which he had given a hundred and fifty guineas—a splendid bay with black legs, and he wished me

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to ride him the following day with the Blovir hounds. Accordingly, next morning we were off together to the covert side, where there was a large concourse of people, "Wing gorse" being a favourite meet. When I mounted my horse, which was sent forward, he was very fresh and in fine condition. My brother had never ridden him. He said, "If I would find neck, he would find horse," with hounds. The fact was that he wanted to see how he would carry me, and it is a wonder that he did not break my neck that day.

I was scarcely mounted, when the hounds were thrown into the gorse, and in a few minutes challenged. The fox broke away down the hill for Woodwell Head, the hounds close upon him, and I never in my life saw fellows ride as on that day, when some of the best Leicestershire riders were out—the three M.'s, Maher, Moore, and Maxy, Sir Harry Goodrich, Lord Albany, my brothers-in-law, Henry and John Dixon, the latter standing six feet five in his shoes, and many others. The pace was so great that, seeing so badly as I did, it was impossible to distinguish one from another; but

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this much I know, fences crashed on all sides as the hunters went at them right nobly. I do think the pluck of the English gentleman shows itself most emphatically across the country with the hounds. I had much ado to keep my place, with but one eye, with a glass fastened into my hat, in order to enable me to see better, and avoid being ridden over, or riding into the hounds; for go my horse would, spite of me, topping every fence like a bird, and nothing apparently daunting him.

"Hold hard, sir, or you'll be into the hounds," called "Goosey," the huntsman.

"Yes," thought I, "hold hard—easier said than done."

I was pulling at my horse, and he pulling at me, and the dew-drops were pouring down my forehead, so hot was I. Hold hard, indeed!—but I did get away a little to the right, but still in the front rank.

Just then a gentleman in a pink coat passed me, his toes stuck in the stirrup in the fashion of a French dragoon—a handsome man, his horse's head high in the air, pulling like the deuce.

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"Mon Dieu!" he ejaculated, and, "Monsieur, Monsieur, which is the way to Melton?"

"Je ne sais pas, Monsieur," said I.

"Ah! mon Dieu! dis is what you call de plaisir, I jamais monté, till Comte Alvanley m'a monté," he said, giving the reins, at the same time, an angry chuck.

This was a French Count, a friend, I believe, of Lord Alvanley, who had mounted him on a splendid animal, and I lost sight of him. There was a cry of the "Whissintine Brook in front," and truly it was, full to the brim. I saw the hounds all splash across it. On my left, eight gallant fellows, including Goosey, charged it in line, and everyone fell back into it. Seeing this misadventure, I pulled to the right, opposite where I had remarked a place apparently like that where cattle come to drink. I let my horse go, for I could not stop him, and giving him a flanker with my whip, he cleared it like a bird. There was a general cheer from those who had pulled up. "Bravo!—well done!"

"Much you know about it," thought I—"it's the horse, not me."

On the other side of the field the hounds

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were scrambling over a high wattle fence, with a broad ditch on one side, all "giving tongue," which so excited my nag that, shaking his head, he went at it, and passed over it like a deer, lighting on the other side close to the hounds, who threw up their heads. The fox had run to earth in a drain.

I am not ashamed to acknowledge that, on dismounting from my horse, I was rejoiced to do so with whole bones. Some of the field came up like drowned rats, among them Henry Dixon. "How well you rode!" exclaimed several—"how splendidly your horse took the brook!" But not a word did I say. John Dixon also came up, and complimented me on my splendid horsemanship, but I did not tell him who deserved all the praise. "I'll go home with all my glory," thought I.

Sir Jacob Astley had given up his fox-hounds the year before, as the keepers had killed the foxes, and therefore latterly he had had no sport. The only man who really preserved was the Honourable George Mills, of Elmham Hall, who a few years subsequently became the master of a subscription pack of fox-hounds, which I will

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do him the justice to say he did all in his power to keep up.

While in Leicestershire, I received information from Lord James that the corps of yeomanry cavalry of my county had been disbanded, and, of course, among them, my pet troop of Norfolk Rangers, with the well-being of which I had taken so much trouble, and which I had been so interested in getting into good order.

We remained for Christmas at Edmondthorpe, but my wife being taken ill, we were advised to move for a change of air, and we went into Cheshire to her uncle's. I drove her in my phaeton, with Punch and another, who went well in harness together. The phaeton was very complete, with a seat behind, carrying a man and maid-servant, and we travelled about thirty miles a day. I had some good runs with the Cheshire hounds before the conclusion of the season, and then returned into Norfolk by way of Leamington, where we stayed with a friend. Here I had an opportunity of visiting Warwick Castle, the famous residence of the Kingmaker. I turned my horses into Raynham

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Park in the month of May, and interested myself all that Summer in gardening.

Mrs. Loftus and I went to London in the Spring of 1829, to her mother's house in Clarges Street, and while there my only child, a daughter, was born. I passed much of my time on the Thames, with my eldest brother-in-law, a man about a stone heavier than myself, who had built, under my direction, a small two-oared gig. I was of opinion that if we had a boat with long and pliable oars, suitable to our weight—we were both light—we could keep pace with a four-oared boat. Accordingly, he being well able to bear the expense, we went to old Serle, to whom I gave my plan and ideas, to which he listened attentively. The plan being drawn, and the measurement taken, the boat was built in scientific style.

About this time a match, which caused great excitement, was made between the Guards' boat and Mr. Osbaldiston, and the Arrow Club. The Guards asked me to give an opinion of their boat, and of their style of pulling it. I went also to look at the style of rowing of the Arrow, and I saw a vast difference between

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the two boats, and in favour of the Arrow. In the first place she was higher out of the water, and her men were of lighter weight; the Guards' boat, on the contrary, was too low in the water, and her men were too heavy for her, as I told them, but they paid me no attention. The race took place, and the Guardsmen were beaten. Our own little boat, which was finished and afloat in a month, was painted dark brown, with one light streak of white, and looked very pretty. She was long, and had just beam enough to keep her steady. We started one fine calm day, and rowed up to Putney, to try what we could do with our oars, and the boat seemed to skim along beautifully. Next day we passed the bridge, and went some miles beyond it. Seeing the approach of our jeering friends on one occasion, when coming up the river, we got into our little skiff, and pulled gently up till they came close to us, when they hailed—

"Holloa! where did you get that little boat?" (We had kept her construction a secret.)

"She's very pretty."

"I am glad you think so," I said.

"You've very long oars," they remarked.

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As soon as they were abreast of us, I said,

"Now let us see what we can do with them."

They gave way, and we did the same, and were able to hold our own for a short time, but eventually they went ahead of us.

"Why, she can go!" they exclaimed.

They were so surprised at our good rowing that they made several inquiries about our boat, but we gave them no information. In subsequent tussles with them, we more than once had the lead. Serle told me that he afterwards built several boats on the same plan, and always with much success.

Since that time many changes have taken place on the Thames in the art of boat-building, of which I know nothing myself. Boats with "outriggers," &c., &c., I have never seen, but they have been well described to me, and of course with these greater power is attained. *I* am not so bigoted an "old Tory" that I cannot admit that any improvements have been made since the days of "my youth."

Great excitement prevailed far and wide throughout England when Lord John Russell's

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well-known Reform Bill became the subject of discussion. It will hardly be credited what extraordinary ideas prevailed among the labouring classes upon this Bill. The Radical newspapers, always ready to take advantage of any opportunity to excite the people against their rulers, did not forget to do so then. I had a man occasionally to work in my garden. I used myself to take the spade, and dig for hours. I was fond of the kitchen garden, and delighted in keeping it in good order; and I grew a quantity of vegetables, &c., in it. One day, with the man close by me, I was digging a piece of ground for planting out, when he turned round and said,

"Well, sir, I see you can work with the spade as well as I can."

"I am very glad you think so," I replied.

"I never saw a gentleman do it so well before."

"All gentlemen can do it if they like. I have seen many. I myself like it as a good healthy work."

"Well, sir, that's very fortunate, for soon we

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shall all be alike, and you'll have to work every day as well as me."

"I could do so if I were obliged, but I have money enough to keep me from working every day."

"Ay, sir, but then, you know, we are all to be alike. You are to have no more money than me."

"And what is to be done with my money?" I asked.

"Why, it's to be divided among all those who have none; and everybody is to do the same."

"Well, Hunt, that is a capital idea. Where did you pick it up?"

"Why, sir, don't you know?—you read, sir, about this 'Form Bill.'"

"Oh! I have read about the Reform Bill, but I have heard nothing like this in it. And where, Hunt, did you hear it?"

"Why, I heard it a month ago, and the other night again at Sporle, and last Saturday night at another meeting in our public-house here at Dunham, when a man came, as to the other

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meetings, with a pack on his back, full of little books, out of which he read. He gave some, and sold others at one penny each; but we were not to tell the gentry, the parsons, or the farmers. He told us *we* were not to let 'the cocky farmers' any longer use their thrashing machines, because they took away the labour out of our hands."

"So he told you all this," I said. "And why did you tell me?"

"Well, sir, you have been an officer and a soldier, and so have I been a soldier, and I thought that a gentleman like you could not wish to hurt us poor men."

"Well, Hunt, and you have a pension, too, for your services. Would you like *that* to be divided with those who are worse off than yourself? It is your own now—you have earned it."

"Dash it, sir, *that* won't take away my pension, will it?"

"Why, you said so yourself—we are all to be alike."

He began to scratch his head, and looked very foolish.

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"But, sir, it's all true, this 'Form Bill, isn't it, that *he* said?"

"No," said I; "not one word of it."

I looked at him attentively—a fine handsome-looking man, a little above five feet nine, broad shoulders, but not heavily made, and about forty years of age. I thought to myself, "There is mischief brewing among these poor people, and I will try to find out more about it."

The next day I went to see a farmer who had about three hundred acres of land on the opposite side of the village—Mr. Goddard Johnson—a very sensible, clever, well-read man. We were on very friendly terms, particularly after, as he said, I had saved him from being murdered. The fact was this. When I returned from London in 1829, I went to see and thank him for looking after my little property in my absence, and as I was going up his garden walk to his front door, I heard voices inside, one very loudly declaring the resolution to knock some one's brains out if certain papers were not returned. I then heard a scuffle in the passage, when the door flew open, and out came two men, holding each other fast—one of

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them Johnson, and the other a great athletic fellow. They struggled a moment, and then both went down on the grass-plat together, Johnson below his antagonist, who exclaimed, "Now, you villain, I'll cut your throat!" He was putting his hand into his pocket, apparently to take out a knife, when I rushed at him, and with all my force brought my knees against his side, and turned him over on his back. Johnson, as active as a cat, was instantly on his feet, exclaiming, "A godsend, by St. George!" and threw himself across the other's chest, as I did across his legs, thus pinned him fast. The maid-servant coming to the door when she heard the noise, I sent her to call some of the farm men, who were soon on the spot, and one of them, an old man-of-war's man, who knew well how to handle the rope, tied the fellow's legs, with which he had been kicking most furiously, as I felt in my ribs. We took him to Colonel Mason, the magistrate, close by, whence he was sent to Swaffham Gaol, to wait his trial, for at least four months before the assizes commenced.

It appeared that he had walked into Johnson's front door, where he had first demanded

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something to eat and drink, and then produced a lot of indecent and inflammatory papers, which he asked Johnson to buy. Of these the latter took possession, not considering it safe to disseminate them; and being the chief constable of the parish, he conceived he had a just right to do so. To this man, then, I paid my visit, and informed him of the conversation between Hunt and myself.

"Umph!" said he. "Yes, Mr. Loftus, I am quite aware there is a something going on. The under-constable tells me that the people assemble and talk in groups in the public-house and elsewhere. There is something brewing."

The subscription pack of foxhounds met this year for the first time at Mileham Wood, and had a run, but not particular sport. Sir J. Astley, and Mr. Hammond, of Westam Hall, were, with Mr. Coldham, of Anmer, the committee of management. There was some difficulty in procuring hounds to form a pack, for ours was a bad scenting county for foxes, and required hounds that knew their work. To Tom Hodson, in Yorkshire, a relation of my wife, who managed and hunted the Holderness hounds, a most

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popular man, I wrote, asking him if he had any good hounds to part with. In answer, he wrote that he had five couple of old hounds, of which he would make me a present, to give to Mr. Mills, the master. I was delighted to be enabled to do something towards the establishment of the pack, for these were the very hounds required among the young ones. My good intentions, however, were all frustrated. The hounds came up from Yorkshire, and with them a present to myself from my brother-in-law, John Dixon, of a fine, handsome horse, a well-known hunter, but "which no one could get to cover unless in company with other horses; and if any one *can* manage this horse," he said, "it will be Charles Loftus." I got this horse in order for the season, and he exercised every morning with Punch in my field; but I never allowed him to go on the road with anyone but myself. General Dixon sent his man and horses and some pointers to me at Dunham, to wait his arrival from the moors. I procured a stable for them, having no room in my own. One morning, having to send him into Swaffham, I asked the General's servant to

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ride Punch, adding that I wanted him back by ten o'clock, as I wished to go to Raynham, four miles. John Borham, a smart, dapper little fellow, who thought no end of himself and his abilities, said,

"Pray, sir, can I not take the Yorkshire bay? —he wants exercise."

"You may take him," I said; "but you will never get to Swaffham."

"Lor', sir, I never saw the horse I couldn't ride!"

"Well, try him, and mind and get back in time."

I watched John out of the stable-yard, and saw him turn to the left down the Swaffham Road. Ten o'clock arrived. I had breakfasted; but no John appeared. Eleven, twelve, and still no John. I was thinking of going after him, when at last I saw him sneaking into the yard, leading the horse.

"Well, John, and where have you been to?" I said. "Have you been to the bank?"

"No, sir," he said, looking very stupid, "I never got to Swaffham at all."

"And where have you been all this time?"

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"On the road, sir, fighting with him."

"And why did you not come home?"

"Home, sir?—he'd neither come home, nor go on. I've been no more than a mile from here, till I am ashamed to come back. I'll tell you what, sir, I'd shoot that horse. I never seed such a brute. I never was so beat in all my life."

I could not help laughing.

"Well, John," I said, "I'll see what I can do with him."

"For God sake, sir, do not mount him, he'll kill you. He rears, he kicks, he did all he could to get me off. I walked all the way, leading him home."

I went into my room, put on my shooting-jacket, spurs, and took my hunting-whip. I looked well at the girths, and started on my way to Raynham. We got through the village very well, till we arrived opposite Sir C. Clark's park gate, on the road to Litcham. Here he came to a stand, and would not budge one yard more. There was here a large open space, with no walls or trees, nothing to run against. I coaxed and patted him, but to no purpose. I

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then put his head towards Litcham, and touched him with the spur; he put his ears back and jumped off the ground. I touched him again, and he jumped higher. I struck him with my whip over his flank. The consequence was a tremendous buck up in the air. He wanted to go home. I then began to stick in the spurs, and whip him soundly, and we had a tremendous fight. Each time that he kicked I struck him over the head. He jumped and bucked, and I flogged and spurred. At last he made a bolt to Litcham, three miles, during which time I continued to spur and whip, while he flew like the wind, and I never pulled bridle till I arrived at Raynham, when he was covered with foam, and perspiring with heat. I had him well rubbed down, and a cloth put on him, and I went to the Gardens and Hall to arrange some matters for my brother, Lord Charles, who was abroad. The bay, after this, was as gentle as a child, I could do anything I liked with him. I had conquered him (but only for a time), and I discovered in the end that he was a horse there was no pleasure in keeping. The fights I used to have with him were tremendous; but I always got the better of him.

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The Norfolk hounds meeting one day at Raynham, a gentleman called for me on his way, and we rode together to the park gates, where I was joined by Brown of Norton, whom I had known for some years. He was always well mounted, and a good rider across country, although a heavy man. After the morning salutation, I saw him looking at my horse.

"That's a fine horse, sir," he said. "I am told you have tremendous fights with him?"

"Yes—I have; but he is a first-rate horse across country, and always goes well with the hounds, but is difficult to ride on the road."

"So I am told, sir—how I should like to have a day on him!"

"You may have him to-day if you like, but I must have your horse."

"That you shall with pleasure, sir! There is not a better jumper in the country."

"That I know," for it happened I knew all about this horse, "Silver Tail," bred on Mr. Garrett's farm, belonging to Lord Townshend, at Stiffkey.

Having changed horses, I rode forward to

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see Mr. Mills, the master, and tell him where he was most likely to find the fox. The hounds were thrown into The Osier Carr near the engine-house. In five minutes they opened, and the cry of "Tally-ho!" was heard, followed by "Gone away," and away they went along the banks of the lake, across the road near the church, into the meadows, through Martin Raynham, into "Norman's Borough" (a long plantation, which led to the Godwick Woods), through which they went, without a check, in full cry. The fencing then became sharp and quick, Silver Tail carrying me beautifully. Looking round, I saw Mr. Mills on his good old bay, Colonel Bloomfield, Mr. Hammond of Westacre on a splendid brown horse (and it required a good one to carry him, eighteen stone!), Mr. Chambers of Colkorp, who, well-mounted, was ever in a good place, Chapelow, the huntsman, and Harry, the whip, who, poor fellow, broke the small bone of his leg that day. My bay was also up. There was a check here for two minutes; and when they hit it off again, skirting Mileham Wood, they went away for Neckton Hall, ran through

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the whole line of the plantations without a check, went away to the left towards Elmham Wood, and killed in the open close by; as good a run as I ever saw. The field had wonderfully thinned by this time, however, the only persons up at the finish being Mr. Mills, Brown, on my bay, Chambers, and myself. Colonel Bloomfield had pulled up at Neckton Hall, his own door, his horse beaten, and Hammond was nowhere—all the horses seemed much distressed.

"Well, sir," said Mr. Brown, "I never rode such a splendid horse in all my life!"

"I am glad you like him. *I* was never carried better, either," said I.

"Lawk, sir, will you excuse the liberty I take—dear sir, will you swap?"

"Yes, I will; but mind what I tell you, you take him with all his faults; I will not take him back."

"Lor', sir, why a child may ride him!"

"Yes—with hounds; but the difficulty is to get him along the road alone."

The agreement was made, the gentlemen present all laughing. We went into a shed and changed saddles and bridles, and we all

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parted company, Mr. Mills and I riding together, Mr. Chambers going with Brown. They got on very well till Chambers arrived at home, after which Brown had two miles to go. It was Friday night, and I heard nothing of the bay till Sunday. On coming home from church, I saw a smart little lad in a groom's dress in my stable-yard, who, my groom informed me, had come from Mr. Brown of Norton with a note."

"How is Mr. Brown?" said I to him.

"Why, sir, 'he is no matters,' he has not been well since last Friday."

"Eh? How is the horse?"

"The horse, sir—why, that's it that made him ill. Why, he never got home till twelve o'clock, sir, was obliged to get off and lead him—all the way home. He had his dinner at Mr. Chambers', and on the road the horse would not go. He spurred him, and then the horse kicked him off, and he came home covered with mud. Yesterday, sir, one of the young gentlemen learning to farm said he would try—and lor', sir, he kicked him over his head like a bird, fit to break his neck. Mr.

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Brown says he never saw such a brute!"

This was the horse a child could ride! I now opened the note, which contained a civil request from Mr. Brown that I would take back the bay, and let him have his dear "Silver Tail" again. "No, no," said I, "a bargain is a bargain." I sent word by the boy that I would come and see him soon, which I did. But previously I consulted with Diggins and Chambers, who both advised me to hold to my bargain. He took it very good-naturedly, and he sold the horse, which ran wheeler in the Yarmouth mail, in which he went capitally.

In 1830, soon after the harvest, the newspapers gave accounts of great burnings of corn-stacks in Kent—crimes which were supposed to be the work of French people coming to England for the purpose. The labouring population of Norfolk and Suffolk were much excited, and they met in groups in every village to discuss their grievances, real or imagined. It was supposed by many that emissaries from Kent were doing their mischievous work among them, for the Norfolk people, as a body, I always observed to be most obliging and obedient to

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the law. On coming from London into Norfolk, I was always impressed with their manners, so different from those of the cockneys.

It was in the Winter of 1831 that the fires first occurred in Norfolk and Suffolk. Scarcely a night passed that we were not roused with the alarm of incendiary fires burning in one direction or another, their fearful blazes being seen at a great distance, sometimes as far off as ten or twelve miles, and at other times apparently not more than the distance of two miles. I say apparently, for when we mounted our horses, and had gone two or more miles, the fire still appeared as distant as at first.

As I was going to bed one night at half-past ten, I was disturbed by a ring at my door-bell, and when it was opened, I was informed that a large fire was raging in the neighbourhood of Raynham, ten miles distant. I mounted my horse, and, followed by my groom on another, set off at full gallop. Judge of my astonishment when I discovered that stacks of wheat and barley were burning only a mile from my house! On arriving at the spot where the fire was raging, I found that the Rev. Mr. Hoste

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and Dr. Raven, of Litcham, had arrived, and that they had collected about twenty or thirty labourers, whom Mr. Hoste had formed into a line from the pond to the burning ricks. The women having brought their pails and buckets into service, I made them pass them along. We were speedily joined by a good many farmers of the neighbourhood, who rode up, followed by more labourers from Fransham, and other places, and a good many from my own parish. Seeing that they were all much disinclined to assist, and preferred to stand with their hands in their pockets and look on, I addressed a few words to the men of Little Dunham, asking them to come to me where I stood, which they promptly did, and I continued—

"Look here, my boys—do not *you* behave as ill as these other men are doing. I will take care of you, and protect you; and you know that I can do so, and will do it."

These few words had an immediate effect. They pulled off their jackets and set to work like men. Getting ladders and buckets, we soon prevented the fire from extending, by

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throwing water on the top of the barn, which was thatched, as well as on the stacks not already on fire. The barley and wheat stacks were both consumed, but we saved the barn and other stacks in the yard. But little thanks were due to the labourers of Great Dunham, or to any of those who came from a distance "to see the fire," whose countenances showed most plainly a surly, lethargic disposition, which it was unpleasant to contemplate; but such was the case at the time of which I am speaking. This fire, and other similiar conflagrations, were only too evidently the work of evil-disposed persons.

I went home with the Little Dunham men, and set them down in my kitchen to bread and cheese and a pint of good beer to each man, for which they expressed themselves very grateful. The next morning some men arrived from Great Dunham, and asked me to give them some beer.

"No," said I, "not one drop shall you have from me, or anything else. I took note of those who worked and those who looked on last night, and not one of you did a stroke of work. Your conduct, indeed, plainly showed me what

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you are, and you will gain nothing by such behaviour as that."

Two or three of them looked at me and then at each other. I went on—

"That fire last night was caused by some evil-disposed person, and I suppose that you are aware that whoever that person was, when found out, he will be hanged! And let me tell you, also, that you, who did not assist in putting out the fire, bring yourselves under the suspicion of the public, who will suppose that you had something to do with it. What can be gained by destroying the food which the good God has given for the use of man? Such conduct will bring down upon the guilty the vengeance of Heaven."

"Well, sir," said one of the men, "I know nothing about it."

"I do not say that you do, but you can tell me one thing, why did you not help to put out the fire? The fact is that there is among you some combination or union, and you will all suffer for it when you little expect it!"

With which warning I sent them away out of my yard. And what happened to confirm, as

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it were, my words? The cholera broke out in the following year in Great Dunham village, and it carried off eleven or twelve of its most able-bodied men, besides women and children, while this ravaging disease did not visit Little Dunham, one mile distant, a circumstance the more remarkable because the people of the two places were in the habit of mixing so much together. The world in general notes not things of this kind, but I do, and I firmly believe that the hand of the Almighty is visible in every event that takes place. Nations are punished for their crimes by disease among their populations, or by wars and tumults, bringing with them distress, difficulty, and crime. We have Scripture to prove that in former times the transgression of the divine law was followed by punishment. We cannot be so ignorant as to suppose that the evil deeds of wicked men are not equally punished in these days.

Mr. Goddard Johnson told me afterwards that I had better not give either supper, beer, or money for assisting to extinguish a fire, a thing that every Englishman should be ready to do at any time, without pay, as it might prove, to the

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more reckless and unprincipled, an inducement for committing arson.

A fire occurred some years back at Windsor Castle, when a battalion of the Fusilier Guards were quartered there, and the men were turned out directly it was known at the barracks, and in double-quick time reached the scene, where it was some time before it was discovered exactly where the fire originated. The men were most active, exerting themselves to do their best in every direction where they were required. The officers vied with each other who should be the most active, and do the most daring deed, in their efforts to extinguish it. Among the most conspicuous was a young lieutenant, who had placed himself in a most dangerous position, directing a hose down a chimney up which the fire was raging. Prince Albert, who was watching everything that was going on, and sending intelligence to the Queen, observing his perilous position, called out to him,

"Come down, sir, come down! You will be burnt!"

"Not for a fifty pound note, Your Royal Highness! I have got at it here!"

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And I believe that he really had got at it. I heard this story from the late General George Dixon, who commanded the battalion at Windsor at the time.

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CHAPTER IV.

Alarming Riots in 1831—A Threatening Notice—Consequences of the Disbandment of the Yeomanry—Hunt, the Pensioner—Swearing in Special Constables—Apprehension of a Pedler—Escape and Re-apprehension—Dispersing a Mob—Night Expedition—Greenwood, the Army Agent—My Father's Death.

IN this year, 1831, alarming riots took place in various parts of England, Wales, and Ireland, particularly Merthyr Tydvil, where several people were shot by the military, whom the Government were obliged to send out, to restrain the evil and protect the well-disposed. In the Forest of Dean there was great destruction of property, and the military and yeomanry cavalry had to be employed to restrain the riotous mobs. This year also the labourers of Norfolk assembled in large bodies, and marched to the farm-houses, where they demanded that the threshing machines should be destroyed,

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and in many instances their demand was complied with. Five hundred rioters at a time went from one village to another, proceedings which could not, of course, be permitted to continue. Fires were blazing all over the country every night, and no one knew who might next be attacked by ill-guided, mistaken men, misled by designing scoundrels.

In the midst of this state of things, I received a letter from a gentleman residing near me, a magistrate of the county, who occupied three or four hundred acres of land, and had received a notice that the men were coming to break his threshing machine, requesting me to bring a troop of the Norfolk Rangers. He was born of a noble family, a good neighbour, kind to the poor, and employed many people on his farm. When I saw him, he showed me the letter he had received, which was to the following effect:

"SIR,

"Understanding that you have a threshing machine, worked by horses, we hereby command you to take it to pieces that you may no longer use it. In using it, you prevent the

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honest labourer getting an honest living by using the flail.

(Signed) "SWING."

I told my friend that if I still had the troop (he had forgotten wholly that it was disbanded), I would soon settle the business for him, but the Whig Government had been so very careful to make up a very good budget for Parliament, wishing to show that they could keep the country quiet by means of Liberal measures, that they had thought proper to disband the Norfolk Rangers, "which now, you see, as I expected, are required."

"Ah! yes," he said, "it was a great mistake."

He then requested me to go and get together all the men that I could who had belonged to my old corps.

"Very well. But, sir, I have no power to do any such thing. I should have been too happy to be of assistance. Now you see the consequence of Whig economy! There's the 1st Royal Dragoons at Norwich."

"No," he said, "they are gone—all but one troop. I inquired for them, and I hear that they have been sent for elsewhere."

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That statement was quite correct. As far as my memory serves me, they had been sent to the neighbourhood of Holt, where Sir Jacob Astley also had received threatening notices. The consequence of this absence of a military force, at a juncture such as this, was the raising of three troops of Norfolk Yeomanry Cavalry, which were placed under the command of the Honourable George Mills, as Major-Commandant. One troop was raised by Sir Jacob Astley, who was appointed its captain, another by Mr. Mills himself; the third I raised on the Raynham Estate, consisting chiefly of men who had served with me in the old Rangers, who gladly came forward the moment they heard that their services were required. The troop raised by Mr. Mills, afterwards Lord Sondes, was commanded by my brother Frederick, captain, on half pay, of the 17th Lancers, and I was lieutenant in my troop under Lord Charles Townshend, who was captain. Previous, however, to the formation of this corps, the rioters had proceeded to acts of great violence, for it requires a considerable time to organise such a body, to get the men together, to clothe and

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equip them, and to receive arms from the Tower.

I have related that the Norfolk labourers continued to march, in some instances, in bodies of five or six hundred, who would surround a farmhouse and break the threshing machine of the owner. The magistrates assembled at the Litcham Hall Hotel, my uncle, Lord James, in the chair. The constables of each parish, with the overseers, always brought us lists of people liable to serve as special constables, and we were to bring all those to the meeting who were pensioners. The consequence was that notices were distributed among the people when they were observed to be assembling in knots around our public house.

Early the following morning I had a visit from Hunt, the pensioner, before mentioned. He was a fine man, and when pleased could be very civil and well-mannered. I thought to myself, "What does he want?" but I was determined to show him every civility. When he entered my room, I said to him,

"Well, Hunt, do you want to see me?"

"Yes, if you please, Captain. I have received

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notice to go to Litcham to-day—to be sworn in as a special constable."

"Oh! have you?" said I, "and there are many more who have received the same; and so have I myself."

"I don't see," said he, "what right they have to summon me."

"That shows, Hunt, that you are ignorant of the law."

"And are you going, sir?"

"Of course I am, and I expect to see you there!"

"And what is it for, sir?"

"To swear people to keep the King's peace, and to put down the rioters."

"But, sir, I am a pensioner!"

"So much the better, Hunt, for you will know how to fight against these people."

"You, sir, don't think the people are right in this breaking of machines?"

"No, certainly I do not. I know them to be wrong."

"Well, sir, I don't think I shall go."

"Do as you please, but remember one thing—I can have your name taken off the

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list of pensioners as that of a disloyal man."

"Take my name off!—you do not say *that*, sir!"

"But I do, and mean it. Do you think it just that you, receiving His Majesty's pay, refuse to act when called upon, in the King's name, mind? Besides, you subject yourself to a penalty for that refusal as a citizen."

All this seemed greatly to puzzle Hunt, who scratched his head, and looked confounded, observing that he didn't think there was one man in the village that knew any such thing.

"Then," said I, "the sooner you go and tell them the better." With which he walked off, very crestfallen.

Soon after, I went to Sir Charles Clark's, and we rode together to Litcham, which we found filled with labourers and farmers. In the magistrates' room were Mr. Mills, General Fitzroy, Lord James Townshend, Captain Keppel, the Reverend Mr. Hoste, the overseers of Great and Little Dunham, Fransham, Mileham, and other parishes. The clerk read a long statement of stack-burning and riots. Lord James informed us that they were to be careful

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to stop the hawkers, and examine their packs, to see if they contained lucifer matches (just then imported), with inflammatory papers, both of which they were distributing, exciting the people to arson and mischief; and to take these things from them as unlawful wares.

I had myself an order to send in the names of a hundred special constables, and was directed to patrol the road every night with a certain number of these, between Great and Little Dunham, and Fransham and Sporle. With this order in my pocket, Sir Charles and I set off for home, after having spoken to our two constables, Goddard Johnson and Hubbard, desiring them to meet us at Dunham Lodge at four o'clock, with all the names of the men that they could collect, as it was our intention, Sir Charles being a magistrate, to swear them in. On our way across Litcham Common, we fell in with nearly all our villagers, talking and chattering in the most excited state. Hunt, seeing us, came forward, and commenced an harangue.

"He had never heard of such a thing in *his* lifetime—he had never seen such a job as this afore."

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"Very well," said I, "you will be all up at Sir Charles's at four, the whole of you, and be sworn in."

At this they looked so glum that I thought I had never seen anything so amusing. Sir Charles smiled, and as we rode home we discussed the scene.

At four o'clock we met, and with some difficulty got through the ceremony of swearing in. Hunt came to the scratch like a surly dog dragging at his chain. The fear of losing his pension had brought him partly to his proper senses. Out of the hundred required of me, I got this night about sixty. The next day saw the remainder gathered together. I put the men into squads of ten and twenty, under the guidance of the principal farmers, to have out so many each night, every man provided with a good stick. I heard one of the fellows say, as I was leaving—"Dang it, that's a sharp un, that Mr. Loftus." They felt that they were "done brown," being sworn in to keep the peace in lieu of breaking it.

For two or three nights all went well, our men assembling, and patrolling the roads till day-

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light. I used to be out most nights with Johnson, and sometimes alone, armed with a brace of pocket-pistols and my sabre, riding or walking, according to the distance to be done. The worst of it, for myself, was my seeing so badly at night, so that, when it was dark, it was necessary for me to have my servant with me. Hunt had become more tractable, and used to cap me in military style, particularly after I had given him the command of twenty men. I found him one night drilling them before the public house—"Right, left—step all together, you beggars! Now you've got it, dang it, keep it!"

My little army began to look quite respectable. I got them all together one afternoon from all the villages, and had a field day in my pasture, making Hunt drill-sergeant, which pleased him mightily, and I have no doubt he now felt proud to be a pensioner and a loyal man. I made him tell the men off in threes and sections, in four divisions, and in an hour they really began to move well together. All the old women and children about came to see the parade. At the conclusion, I sent to the

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public-house for beer, and the men drank to the King's health in a pint each, then parted with three cheers.

The next morning old Mr. Buck rode down to tell me how much obliged he and all felt, seeing that they all were quite safe now. After my review, quite a military ardour had sprung up in Fransham and elsewhere, and my men all went home in the best humour. "They would go anywhere," they said, "with their captain," who attributed some of their newly-born ardour to the beer of which they had partaken at the finish, poor fellows.

A few nights later, by a bright moonlight, I stole down alone, with my pistols and a good stick, to Sir C. Clarks' gate, meaning to look into Johnson's stack-yard, for which purpose I had to go down the Litcham Road. I had previously sent out a party down the Neckton Road, some suspicious persons having been seen, supposed to belong to "Swing." I had passed the Lodge gate, when I observed a man with a pack on his back, who came up from Litcham, turn into Johnson's stack-yard, without perceiving me, as I was close to the hedge. He

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went direct towards the stacks, but I followed him quickly, calling out—

"Stop! I want to speak to you. Where are you going?"

He turned, and looked greatly surprised to see me.

"And what's *that* to you?" he asked.

"It is something to me. What are you doing here?"

"I am going to the house."

"No, you are not. That is the way to the stack-yard."

"And what is that to you?"

"I'll tell you what it is to me—that I am a constable, and you shall go no further."

At that moment I heard wheels on the Litcham Road.

"Who's there?" I called. "Stop!"

"Johnson, the jailor, of Swaffham."

"The very man I want. Come here. I have a prisoner."

Johnson came up immediately, and I explained the case to him—that this man was one of those we were commanded to search, and he must take him to Swaffham, whither I would

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follow him. The man said "he would not go." We told him that if he would not do so quietly we should force him into the cart. After swearing an oath or two at us, and seeing we were supported by some of my patrol, who came up at that moment, he got into the cart, grumbling and growling. I gave a hint to Johnson to watch him well, and to see that he did not get rid of his pack, or any of its contents. I promised to follow him quickly, and to go with him to Mr. Marcon, the magistrate. Then, walking home, I called up my groom, and desired him to saddle "Punch." I put on a duffel coat, and changed my hat for a wide-awake. The night had turned cold, and the sky was overcast, as I rode to Swaffham, through Sporle. Going up the hill to Swaffham, I saw a man walking before me very fast, and, looking at him, immediately perceived that he was the very man whom I had a short time before taken prisoner! I said not a word to him, but as I came up to him he called out—

"Pray, sir, is this the road to Swaffham?"

Disguising my voice, I replied—

"Yes. I am going there myself, and will show you the way."

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"Thank ye," he said; adding—"I have had the devil of a bother. But I have given them the slip."

"What's the matter?" I asked.

"Why, what's the matter!—as I was coming into the village, a whipper-snapper of a fellow stopped me, and said I should not go in there, because there was a deal of fires going on, and he was told to stop people going there."

"Ah, there *have* been a great many fires."

"Yes, I have heard all about them; and I have got some books in my pack, telling what the people ought to do."

"Oh! I should like to see these books. What are they apiece?"

"Only twopence. When we get to Swaffham you can see them."

I walked on by his side till within a quarter of a mile of the town, and then said—

"Now, I'll ride forward to the Crown Inn yard, where, if you follow me, I'll give you something to drink, and see these books. Where do you come from?"

"From Kent, sir."

The very man, I thought, as I rode on to

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look for Johnson, whom I saw standing before old Fincham the chemist's shop, the great blue bottles shining behind him in the window. He was staring about him in every direction, and when I hailed my trusty jailor, he sprang forward, looking rather ashamed.

"You've lost your prisoner," I said.

"I have, sir."

"And I have got him."

"How, sir, in the name of fortune!"

"I have walked my horse by his side all the way from Sporle; he did not recognise me in this disguise."

"Well, sir, *I* should not have known you either."

"You get behind the door of the stable yard of the Crown; he'll be here in five minutes."

I put up my horse, and returned to the street, feeling like a detective, as I saw my man coming along, looking suspiciously about him. I turned to the gate, and he joined me. The moment Johnson heard him speak, he rushed out from behind the door and seized him. He struggled for a minute, and when I went to Johnson's aid, and the poor wretch discovered the whip-

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per-snapper in me, his rage and execrations were dreadful to hear and see. We marched him off to Mr. Marcon's, and his pack, on being examined, was found to be full of match-boxes and inflammatory papers. As we had orders to stop these people, Mr. Marcon said I had done quite the right thing. The man was taken to gaol, to be tried, I supposed, at the Spring Assizes; but as I was never summoned to give evidence, I suppose he was let off.

And now it may be asked how did Johnson come to lose him? He had been to Walsingham Gaol, and being very tired, had gone with his man into a public-house for a glass of beer, leaving the pedler in the cart, which, of course, he immediately left. When Johnson found the bird was flown he had hoped to find him by taking the Neckton Road, but I, fortunately, taking the other, was more successful.

In the Spring of the year, my dear father went to London, in pretty good health. I went to Stiffkey in the Winter two or three times, to talk over the events of recent occurrence. He had heard of the pedler ad-

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venture, but wished to hear it again from myself; and much amused he was by the narration. There had been no fires around Stiffkey, nor any attempt to destroy machines. However, an event occurred which caused some amusement among the gentlemen of the hunt meeting the hounds at Elmham Hall. As we were intending to draw the wood for a fox, information was brought that about three hundred men were on their way to Melton Hall for the purpose of breaking a machine. I think we mustered about twenty-five or thirty gentlemen and farmers, all well mounted. We put the hounds into a stable, immediately rode away for Melton, and passing through the park, overtook the mob going into Sir Jacob's farmyard. As he come out to meet us, he observed these gentry, and desired them to move off his property; but they refused, and declared that if he did not put away his threshing-machine they would smash it to pieces themselves, accompanying this threat with another refusal to leave his grounds. We determined to disperse them. More people coming up to join us, we formed into bodies of four or

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five horsemen. Mr. Hammond of Westacre Hall, who had served as an officer in the Dragoons, Mr. Mills, who had been in the Blues, and myself, in one of these small bodies, led on the charge against the mob, who flew in all directions, some falling down to save themselves from the lash of the whip, which descended freely among them. I observed a man throw a stone at Mr. Hammond, who rode at him as he ran away, and caught him just as he was scrambling over a gate, and with his horsewhip administered four beautiful flankers on his back, which made him roar out most vociferously. This flagellation had a marvellously good effect upon the minds of those near the delinquent, for they doubled their pace to get clear of the horsemen. I also had the satisfaction of applying four or five lashes to the person of one of these mischievous blackguards, led on very often by those *capable* of knowing and doing better things. After this we heard no more of such assemblages, but a threatening letter was sent to Sir Jacob Astley, of which he took no notice.

In a few days I went to Raynham for some

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shooting. A large party was assembled at the Hall. While we were at dinner, there arrived a messenger to say that a great mob of machine-breakers was gone towards Walsingham. We were requested to render any assistance that was in our power, in order to stop their disorderly proceedings. All was bustle among us at once. Lord Charles exclaimed—

"Here's a pretty thing! What's to be done, Charles?"

"Why, we must go, of course."

The ladies were all in alarm, and hoped the mob would not come to the house in our absence. Horses and carriages were hauled out. Sir Edward Bowater, of the Guards, voted the whole affair a great bore; a fat lawyer, who dearly loved his dinner, and the quiet discussion of a bottle of claret after it, and was not at all to martial deeds inclined, was terribly put out. Notices were sent off to the near tenants, who in half an hour arrived mounted, some of them armed with the old sabres of the Rangers worn by their fathers. Sergeant Bond was among them, wearing his Ranger dress, helmet and all! It was really an amusing and

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exciting scene. The courtyard of the dear old hall looked as it must have done when the knights assembled in it in ancient days. Lights were moving swiftly to and fro, shining from the windows on the earnest faces of the gentlemen, while the farmers waiting without were being regaled with pots of ale, for which Lord Charles was noted. After these stirrup cups were quaffed, both veterans and the young men were eager for the fray as they got on horseback, ready for the order to start. I had only my little pony, which I had driven in my gig that morning nine miles, but he could trot twelve miles an hour. Having ascertained our numbers, we rode through the park gates in twos in military order, Colonel Bowater taking the lead, I acting as aide-de-camp, with old Diggins' assistance, On passing over Hampton Green, a horseman from Sir Jacob Astley's joined us with a letter, to say that he had gone forward with a party from Melton, and would join us at Basham. We trotted forward over Hampton Mill Bridge. The night was very dark, the hedges very high in the narrow lanes, and we had some difficulty in finding our

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way to the high road to Basham. Colonel Bowater continued grumbling at rioters all the way. Richard Penn, a most amusing fellow, who was mounted on Lady Charlotte's pet pony, which had plenty of spirit, kept cutting jokes that made us laugh all the way. On drawing near Basham, he and I rode forward to reconnoitre.

On the top of the hill was Sir Jacob and a large party of his tenants, mounted, waiting for us. We trotted on to Walsingham Abbey, Mr. Lee Warner's seat, where we all drew up in military order, much to the astonishment of the old squire, who, roused up at twelve at night, was informed of our arrival. They had heard nothing of the rioters, no more than we had, since we started. On passing Hampton, I sent a man to Fakenham for our two old trumpeters of the Rangers, Samuel Tuttell and Jonas Wright, who joined us at Walsingham, and proved very useful in collecting our men from the different public-houses, when ordered to assemble at bugle call. We had some coffee and cold meat in Mr. Lee Warner's hospitable mansion, where we remained till five o'clock in the morning,

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when Diggins and I sallied forth to the town to hear the news. We went from one public-house to another, to see our men, who were very merry over their pipes and tobacco and ale; and I might have been more than merry, too, had I acceded to the repeated invitation to take an "early morning," which I thought it prudent to decline.

There were several of our old Norfolk Rangers among them, and when Diggins and I went back to breakfast at Walsingham Abbey, as wise as when we left it with regard to the rioters, Mr. Warner and the clergyman of the parish both expressed their regret that the Rangers had been disbanded, as they would have been so useful at this crisis. Bowater, who, like many a Whig, disliked the yeomanry cavalry, had the pleasure of hearing his Government abused for disbanding our corps, and the high praise of their efficiency at the time, to boot.

We waited till past seven o'clock, hearing nothing, and at eight o'clock we sounded the bugles, which brought our men trotting in. We drew up in line opposite the old Abbey, a

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fine morning fortunately succeeding a calm night. I formed the men into two divisions, and put old Bond and two other old Rangers at the head of the light division, and Diggins and two sergeants on the right of the second division, and told them off into threes, and right and left of division, not daring to attempt more. We then gave the word, "Three's right," which was capitally executed. Mr. and Mrs. Warner and a number of people collected at the Abbey, in high spirits. Sir Jacob, also, was most active with his men. All being ready, we marched off with the bugles playing "The girls we left behind us," to the amusement of Penn and the colonel, who smiled. We rode through Walsingham town, in which we met old Denny and his son, both well mounted, coming to offer their assistance. I sent them to reconnoitre around Fakenham, and there to meet us, which they did.

Here we heard nothing of the rioters, but that they had been seen on the road to Ryburgh, about a hundred strong. It now appeared that hearing of our going to Walsingham, and remembering the castigation they had received

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before, they thought it most prudent to march home again.

Our goodly appearance in Fakenham astonished the people, and our mustering in this quick military style had a wonderfully good effect all round the country. All dispersed to their homes, and their commanders were glad to return to their quarters at Raynham, where the ladies were happy to see their knights safe and sound, and to hear the lively air played by the two old buglers, whom we took back with us; Lord Charles ordered them breakfast in the servants' hall, and we enjoyed our tea and toast with the ladies.

After all these events, my father, as I have said, being in London with my sisters, Mrs. Loftus, my daughter, and I posted in May, in the old chariot, across the country to Cheltenham, where we remained till June, when I was summoned to London upon the severe illness of my good father, whom I found in a weak, low state, but in possession of all the faculties of his mind, as bright and as intellectual as ever. He expressed great pleasure in seeing me, He told me that he suffered no pain, was quite calm,

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gentle, and considerate to all. I perceived that he was sinking fast, and with a sad heart came to the conviction that we soon must lose him.

Guthrie, my old surgeon, who attended him, told me that he would go off without a struggle, which was some comfort. My father, expressing a great wish to see his old friend, Mr. Greenwood, the Army agent, my brother Ferrers, I think, went to him with the request; and when he came to Wimpole Street, he had a long interview with my father, who, I was aware, had a great regard for and every confidence in him. Greenwood was a most popular man with the Army, and most generous—many an officer's account stood overdrawn at his bank. The Duke of York died indebted to him. Ferrers sat up night after night with my dear father, in which duty I assisted him while in town. Nothing could exceed the attention of his good and faithful servant, John Lane.

I returned to Cheltenham, whence I took my wife and daughter back to Norfolk, and this at my father's request. I was afterwards to return to him; but, alas! the day following I received

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a letter to say he was gone. My good, lamented father's remains were buried in Raynham Church in the park, where I attended, with my brothers, the last, sad ceremony—to me a most melancholy scene; so many whom I have dearly loved lay there. I think I may say with truth that when I look back upon all the events that have come within my knowledge, no children had more cause to regret the loss of an excellent father than we had, or more reason to be proud of his character as a Christian gentleman.

The descendant of an ancient and noble family, he was imbued with the highest principles of honour which should belong to an English gentleman. Courteous in the sphere in which he moved, he never sought to gain popularity by stooping to subserviency to others. In his early career, he had seen much service, and, so far back as the time of Washington and the American rebellion, had been twice wounded in that disastrous campaign; and on one occasion had been within a hundred yards of that General, whom he nearly captured. The men whom he had with him were all knocked out of their saddles by the American riflemen,

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concealed behind a fence. Had he been fortunate enough to take such a prize, probably the whole course of events would have been changed.

My father sat for many years for a borough in Ireland, and also was M.P. for Tamworth and Great Yarmouth. He was the personal friend of the Duke of York, whom he ably defended in the House of Commons against the infamous charges brought against H. R. Highness by a cabal got up for the purpose of throwing a slur upon the Duke regarding the Army promotions. H. R. Highness never forgot my father, as he showed by his attention to him and his family, to me personally, on all occasions.

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CHAPTER V.

Re-incorporation of the Yeomanry Cavalry—Prizes for good Shooting—Uniform of the Norfolk Regiment—Reception at Norwich—Docking the Horsetails—Sir Jacob Astley attacked—Battle with Roughs—Machine Breakers—Lord Brougham on the Introduction of Machinery—Visits of the "Arabs"—Their Sharp Practice—General Fitzroy's Harriers.

I returned with my brothers to London, where there were many arrangements to make. On my arrival at home, I received a note from the Lord-Lieutenant regarding the formation of the Yeomanry Cavalry Corps, which, as I hinted some time before, was in contemplation.

Sir Jacob Astley and Mr. Mills having called to consult with me, I went over to Kimberley, and the result of that interview was the formation of the corps of three troops. I lost no time myself in collecting the men of the Raynham troop. Our names having

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appeared in the Gazette, we were authorised to commence drill. I did not wait for the clothes to be made, feeling that the men could be drilled in their own, and with their saddles and bridles as well as with the regular accoutrements which were preparing for them in London. All the Raynham men, who lived near and those at no great distance, I used to assemble in the park, in the evening, twice in the week, so as to get two hours' drill in the Summer evenings before it was dark. I had two very good non-commissioned officers, who had been sergeants in the 24th Light Dragoons, of which my father was the Colonel. (He had originally raised that regiment, principally of Norfolk men.) With the assistance of these, old Diggins, Sergeant Bond, and Mr. Case, of Testerton Hall, who acted as quartermaster, and was in every way qualified to be of use to a yeomanry corps, I soon completed its formation, and I may say that we were actually ready to take the field before the other troops had commenced their drill.

As soon as the arms arrived from the Tower, they were served to the men—swords and

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pistols. But when I afterwards became Commandant of the corps, I changed the latter for carbines, and in the use of that weapon my men became most expert. I knew that men who were constantly using fowling-pieces in a sporting county, such as Norfolk, would be more *au fait* with the carbine than the sword; but with the use of the latter I made them fully acquainted. We shot for a prize every year, when on permanent duty, and we had also a contest for a prize sword. I commenced this plan by giving the first prizes in both trials myself. This example was followed afterwards by the captains of all the troops, each giving a prize in his turn. By this means great excitement and useful interest were created, and the men looked forward with anxiety to the annual meeting of the corps. At last the clothing arrived, and when fully equipped the men looked very well. I had, by Mr. Mills's request, gone to London to choose and order the helmet, which I did from the pattern of one that I had seen in a French regiment during the Peninsular campaign, with black horse-hair depending over one side, the peak of black leather, edged with brass, fish

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scales for chain under the chin. The mountings of the officers' helmets were gilt; the clothing of all was scarlet, with silver epaulettes, and brass scales for officers and men; the trowsers were blue, with red stripes, all cut in regular cavalry shape. The Major-Commandant, the Honourable George Mills, had three years' allowance advanced for the equipment of the corps, at the rate of three pounds per man; and little enough to find everything for a cavalry soldier, as I found afterwards to my cost.

In October, 1832, we mustered on Hempton Green, and made altogether a good appearance; Sir Jacob Astley on the right of the line with his men, and Raynham on the left. I was only lieutenant of this corps, a position in which I felt I should be more useful, and therefore I refused the command offered to me of the Elmham troop, which my brother Frederick accepted; and he, being a cavalry officer, was of great service to it. In Mr. Berny Caldwell we had a very active cornet and a good horseman, who rode well to hounds.

In 1833, on the morning of our march to Great Yarmouth for the eight days' permanent

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duty, my sisters, on horseback in Raynham Park, presented the Raynham troop with the standard —the colours blue and crimson, with Tamworth Castle embroidered. On entering Norwich, we were hooted by an immense mob, which showed their feeling against the military, especially the Yeomanry, who they knew were formed in order to assist the civil powers to keep the peace. I, myself, got dreadfully abused while riding at the head of my troop. The officers belonging to a cavalry regiment, then quartered in Norwich, came out, with their band, to meet us. After the billets were served out and the men dismissed to their quarters, we were invited to dine at the officers' mess in the barracks, where they gave us a sumptuous repast. When our colonel rose to depart, my brother Frederick and myself, when at the door, were requested to re-rejoin them, and to favour them with some songs. We readily agreed, not guessing at their intention, which was, according to their expression, "to sew us up." But our adjutant, who was an old campaigner, declared to me, in a whisper, what their intention was, and I passed the hint to Frederick and the others. I sang several songs,

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and they kept it up with great spirit till it was very late, but *we* were very cautious in taking wine. Not so our hosts, who indulged so freely that they were all left under the table; they had locked us in, but we hunted for the key, and finding it in one of their pockets, we "turned the tables" on them by locking them up in their own mess-room for the night, and leaving the key in the door, walked home safe and cool. These gentlemen had promised to come and see us off in the morning at seven o'clock. We did our eight days' duty at Yarmouth as well as could be expected, it being the first time the corps had been called together on permanent duty.

A few incidents of rather an amusing character happened, and if I relate one or two of them my readers will forgive me, for while in Norfolk last year I met several members who had served in the yeomanry with me, whom I had not met for five and twenty years, and no doubt they will experience some pleasure in having recalled to their memory the scenes of their younger days. Many of my old comrades have passed away to that bourne whence no traveller re-

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turns, and not many, I fear, now remain in existence.

In those days it was the fashion for the horses' tails to be cut short. I have often wondered why so cruel a practice was ever adopted, for it certainly does not improve the appearance of the animals, but such was the case then, and I believe that in many places it still exists. First, it is contrary to nature. There is nothing which the Great Creator gave to men or animals but what was meant for their benefit. Let any man of observation enter a field where horses are at grass, on a hot Summer day, when the flies are teasing them, and he will perceive the wise use for which the horse is gifted with his long, graceful tail.

The regulation orders were that all officers and members of the corps were to clip their horses' tails short. Just at this period many people had adopted what was styled "the long tails," and in Hyde Park, and elsewhere, they were becoming generally the fashion. The tail was allowed to grow long, descending almost as low as the hocks, being cut off two inches above them, and this had a more natural and pleasing

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appearance to the eye, and was of some use to the horse. It was observed by the adjutant that two officers in the corps had not obeyed the order regarding their nags, the captain of the Melton troop being one, and his lieutenant the other. In the billets taken up at Yarmouth, it so happened that the horses of these officers stood next to each other, "the two long tails." A brother officer, wishing to play a trick upon the lieutenant, and give rise to some fun, planned that his horse's tail should be cut short; it was not a thoroughbred nag, but that of his captain was. A man in the stable undertook the task of docking the animal, but he made a dire mistake, and cut quite close the fine tail of the captain's thoroughbred. When the thing became known in the morning to the owner, there was a tremendous row, and it was the more provoking to the captain because it was inspection day, and he was anxious that his charger should appear to the best advantage. He came to me on the subject, in a great rage, and said he would give fifty pounds to find out the delinquent, but who he was he never discovered. The joke rather amused the men,

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who very naturally said among themselves, "The officers ought to have obeyed the order —*we* did." The lieutenant did not get off "scot-free" either. Before we quitted for Norwich, his horse had lost his long, flowing tail also.

My brother Frederick and I had taken lodgings together at Yarmouth, and went home together, after mess at the Angel Hotel. On returning home one night, soon after nine o'clock, we saw a great mob collected, and from the midst of it heard the voice of one of our officers, whom the mob were abusing, "because he was one of the yeomanry!" My brother and I squeezed through the crowd, and found Sir Jacob Astley surrounded by a set of roughs and scamps. I took his arm, and we quietly walked with him to his hotel, the "Bear" over the Bridge, being joined, before we reached it, by several of our men, and Captain Stoddart, of the Royal Engineers, who afterwards went to Bokhara, and, with his companion, Captain Conolly, was there foully murdered before Wolff could reach him. The gallant officer, who thus perished in June, 1843, was deeply regretted.

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As we were about to enter the hotel, the mob made a furious attack upon us. One man, big enough to eat Sir Jacob, who was a small man, seized that gentleman by the throat. Stoddart, seeing this utterly unprovoked assault, instantly struck out with his right arm, and caught the big bully under the jaw, and he went down as if struck by a butcher's mallet. About twenty of Astley's men, who were at the "Bear," at supper, rushed out, and there was a battle royal. Our adjutant, who was a fat, short man, was tripped up, and I, being knocked down at the same moment, fell upon him. Our men decided the battle in five minutes—they were too strong and active for the "Yarmouth Herring boys," (as they were dubbed), who quickly took to their heels, and wisely never came near us afterwards.

Sir Jacob invited us to supper, and we laughed and talked over the events of the evening, the old adjutant looking quite happy, with a glass of whisky by his side, and a long pipe in his mouth. We sang several good songs, and kept up the fun till morning. At eleven o'clock we were on parade, mounted, and in

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marching order, and I never saw the men turn out better than they did on that morning.

Notwithstanding the dislike with which we were regarded, the formation of this corps had evidently a good effect upon the rural population, and they began to understand how useful it was in the protection it afforded to life and property, for although stack burnings still occurred occasionally, no attempts were made to destroy machines, of which I was aware, excepting in one instance. One afternoon I perceived five-and-twenty men, who were strangers to me, passing my gate, and going towards that of Dunham Lodge, Sir Charles Clark's. On making inquiries at the public-house, I learnt that they were only part of a gang of machine-breakers, some way off. I lost no time in proceeding to Sir Charles's, passing the men in the carriage-drive through the park, without taking the slightest notice of them. I ran forward to the house, and fortunately found the master of it at home, just come in from shooting, his double-barreled gun in his hand. I briefly told him the cause of my sudden visit.

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"What shall I do?" said he.

"Come with me into your stack-yard. Is your gun loaded?"

"Yes."

"Give me that other in the corner, and we will frighten these fellows away. You will see."

Going at once to the yard, we there found the men talking to the bailiff, who was expostulating with them. Sir Charles, who was a quiet and peaceful man, not formed physically for combat with such a set of roughs, still possessed the spirit of the English gentleman, and quietly demanded what they wanted in his yard, which it would be better for them to quit. A man, respectfully touching his hat, said,

"Sir, we were told that you have a threshing-machine, which we are ordered by the Union to break, unless you consent to lay it by."

Sir Charles said he knew nothing of their Union, nor should he consent to lay by his machine for such a threat, and mounting the machine, an action in which I followed him, he said,

"The first man who lays his hands on this, I will shoot him."

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"And I am good for two more," I added.

We cocked our guns, and stood ready. Not a man of them advanced one foot, but stood looking at each other. One I saw had a sledge-hammer, another a crowbar. The bailiff, who was a cowardly fellow, came up to me, saying,

"For God's sake do not do such a thing, sir!"

"I will," I said, loud enough to be heard.

The leaders began to talk, and then said,

"I think, boys, we had better go. It ain't worth being shot for, and I think these two gentlemen look as if they meant mischief." And so they all walked off, leaving us victors in a bloodless field.

As soon as they had cleared the park, I rode across home, and loaded my guns, to be prepared for their honouring me with a visit also; but they passed away.

The following morning, at eight o'clock, I had twenty-five Raynham men, under pretence of a private drill, assembled at my place in full dress, and marched them through the village to Sporle, and round by Latham, which had a great effect, particularly in the former, where I

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suspected the men had gone the night before.

The subject upon which I have been writing may be considered by some of little consequence, but I would beg those who may think so, calmly to view the matter ere they come to such a decision. I thought it a most melancholy thing to see a large agricultural population in this country acting in concert to destroy the property of their employers.

Lord Brougham wrote a most able pamphlet upon the subject of machinery at this time, showing how by its introduction all classes were benefited. It had a great circulation everywhere, and did an infinity of good when it was bought up and distributed among the ignorant population (led astray by evil counsels), and I gave my friend Hunt one of them for his instruction, and on meeting him soon afterwards, he said,

"I thank you, sir, for giving me that book, and I think I have been a great fool about many things. I see the truth of what is written about breaking machinery, and setting fire to stacks."

It was some satisfaction to me to hear this

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acknowledgment from a man whom I had considered to be a decided revolutionist, and it confirmed me in my opinion, which I hold still, that if the poor and humbler population had been better instructed than they were in their duty in the station wherein it has pleased the Almighty to place them, they would have better known how to act. Now we have a general system of education going on, but I grieve to find that there are in some large towns schools, established by boards, in which the Bible is not read, nor is any religious instruction given. What, I ask, can come of an education without religion, without morality? Only, I reply, a race of boys and girls ready to form a communist society. It behoves our bishops and our clergy of the Established Protestant Church to make the children of our schools better acquainted with the real meaning of the Commandments and the Catechism, so that they see the vice of lying, stealing, and slandering each other. It is not long since that a little boy of twelve years told me that he did not know that it was wrong to take a cake out of a shop; he had never been told so, and he had

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been at school. Some children lately told a lady, who asked them if they did not know it was wrong to pick strawberries in a nursery garden, that they had never learnt the Commandments, though they were at school every day; so she told them "to go to the schoolmaster and ask him what the eighth Commandment was."

With shooting and hunting the Winter passed away. I went occasionally to Stiffkey and Morston, generally to Mr. Wood's for shooting at the latter. He was quartermaster, and he became lieutenant, in my troop. He was a kind and hospitable friend, and preserved the game at Morston and Stiffkey, at the same time overlooking my gamekeeper, and seeing that I was not robbed, as some gentlemen are by their own keepers. The result was that there was no lack of partridges on the manor. Mr. Bays was equally amiable and good-natured to me upon all occasions—indeed, I may say with truth I always received the greatest civility from all those who occupied land on the Raynham estate. General George Dixon, who came to me every year to shoot, used to go to Morston with me. He was one of three bro-

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thers, all sportsmen. Henry, the eldest, was a first-rate rider with hounds, and had the cognomen of "Nimrod;" while John and George were respectively known as "Fishing-rod" and "Ramrod."

As the prescribed term of years for the minority of Lord Charles Townshend (during which he could not occupy Raynham) had not expired, he built a handsome house at Raynham St. Martin's, called Vere Lodge, a very comfortable residence. But he might have saved himself all this trouble and expense had he not somehow disagreed with my uncle, Lord John, who allowed him, he being trustee, to live in the Hall; and he might there have remained, but he refused his uncle's offer, and the Hall, and the best part of the manor, were now let to a French nobleman.

One day in November of this year I was dining at Kempston Lodge, when General Fitzroy informed his guests "that *the Arabs* had come!" and more were expected. A young lady exclaimed,

"What Arabs are coming?"

"Oh! they come every year," said the

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General, "they make incursions into the country—they take up their quarters in your house, and will have the best of everything in it."

This, of course, led to some amusing stories regarding these Arabs, who, I must explain, were a party of men unprovided with wives and "incumbrances," generally men of high birth and connections, whose plan it was to invite themselves every year to those houses where they knew they should find good company, good cheer, and good sport with the gun, &c. One of these was well known by the *sobriquet* of "the Poodle." He was a clever, well-informed man, of good address and appearance; but although he moved in high circles, and was a descendant of a noble family, he was very capable of taking great liberties. One year, on going to Holkham, he found the house full of company. A lady of the party told me that on the evening of his arrival, as they were all going in to dinner, she saw "the Poodle" take a little delicate pink note from his waistcoat pocket, and present it with the utmost politeness to the lady of the house. To the astonishment and disgust of the ladies assem-

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bled in the drawing-room after dinner, she read aloud this *billet-doux* from "the Poodle:"—

"My bed is too short, by one inch and a half!"

Of this very *delicate* little hint for his special comfort, she, of course, took no notice. I was myself a witness to the "sharp practice" of another of these gentlemen—save the mark!—on the look out for their own creature comforts. I was at Raynham on the arrival of one of the Arab band, with huge portmanteau and gun-cases, and a valet who thought himself a perfect exquisite. His hair was brushed and curled as if just out of the barber's hands, and he was so well got up that it was difficult to distinguish the master from the man, as far as dress went. (But, although these exquisites in their own opinion copy the dress of their master, and the maids those of their mistress, they none of them attempt to copy politeness and civility, for their own benefit among themselves.) The Arab was sitting opposite to me at dinner, when some excellent brown cutlets, done by the French cook, were presented to him, such as you would find in those days at Véry's,

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or at the Trois Frères in the Palais Royal; I saw him turn his head round to his valet, behind his chair, and heard him say in the coolest tone, as if at his own table, "Let these cutlets be kept for my breakfast to-morrow morning!" But he did not obtain the gratification of his selfish wish. My sister overheard the order, and countermanded it to her housekeeper, with another; "Let there be no more cutlets while Mr. —— is here!"

We had plenty of hunting this Winter with the harriers of General Fitzroy, whose eldest son, William, came home from Corfu, where his regiment was quartered. He was a capital rider across country—he had two good horses, both greys, one of them named "Bacchus." Captain Walpole, of the same regiment, came also to Kempston for a week or two. He was a most amusing person, full of fun, and told a good story well. Wishing to help in every way that I could, to amuse him, I had a fox sent down from London in a box. It was agreed between Walpole, William and Frederick Fitzroy, and myself, that the General was not to know anything of this. As soon as the fox arrived, I

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told William Fitzroy, and the next day being an appointed hunting day, I agreed to send him forward in a bag, in charge of a man, to a small furze cover on a rising ground between Lexham and Newton-George—so as to be in advance of the harriers—and here I desired the man to remain till some one came to him.

At half-past ten we mustered at the appointed place. But there was such a thick fog that we could not see fifty yards before us. We got under the lee of a barn of old Mr. Wright of Rougham. Frederick Fitzroy rode old Duke, the gift of the Duke of Grafton to his father. Duke was no longer young, but very handsome, and a first-rate jumper. It was beautiful to see him clear a five-barred gate. Sometimes the General would give me a mount on Duke, when I was sure to be in a good place. He was not in a very good humour that morning, and the drizzling rain and fog did not improve his temper. At half-past eleven the fog cleared off, and it was proposed to put the hounds into the cover I have named. Hearing this, I rode forward, found my man, desired him to let the fox go, and stuff the bag into a hole. The hounds

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were thrown in, and we began to crack our whips, when old Mr. Maule shouted out—

"Hoh! There's a fox—there's a fox!"

"My hounds are not *fox* hounds, sir!" cried General Fitzroy.

Presently, on the other side, towards Castleacre, there was a cry of "Tally ho!" followed in another moment by the shout of "Gone away!" and away down the hill the hounds challenged it, at a rattling pace.

"Stop the hounds, William, stop the hounds!" shouted the General.

"We don't hear," thinks I to myself; and no one wished or tried to stop them. I saw General Fitzroy run down the hill into a lane, shouting to his flying heavy cavalry and light infantry, all running away before him after one enemy, shouting the command "to stop the hounds," the very last order that anyone intended to obey. As he dashed along, Mr. Maule came bustling up on his big bay—and, indeed, it required a big horse to carry his weight.

There was no check, and for ten minutes we went the best pace, and it was hard work for anyone to keep his place. I saw Frederick on

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old Duke flying over the fences like a bird. Captain Walpole rode a horse of his host's, out of which he took the shine that day.

After a three minutes' check they hit it off again across the river, and away for Old Abbot's Farm, passing that, leaving Westacre Hall on the left, and on to Massingham Heath, where they ran into poor Reynard. Frederick Fitzroy, jumping off old Duke, which he had ridden splendidly—for he was the only man up—saved him from being devoured. A countryman near, employed in cutting furze, got a sack from a cottage hard by, and undertook to carry him home for us, "to live to fight another day."

What became of the General meantime? He galloped down the lane and was lost "to view," and to his hounds. But hearing, on his right hand, a horn blowing, and sounds of hounds, he turned after them down a road which led straight ahead to Raynham, six miles away; and seeing people popping over fences to the right, he thought they were his own hunt. It so happened that Robert Hammond's staghounds were in full chase of a red deer they had turned out on Swaffham Heath, and he had

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crossed our line after the fox, and had gone up the high road towards Raynham. The General, under the impression that these were his own hounds, thought he had found a good place, galloped along the road, passed Weasenham, up to Lord Charles's cottage, where he fell in with Robert Hammond, blowing his horn to call his hounds out of cover, for the stag had taken the river.

"Why, good gracious!" said the General, "where have I got to? Have I been hunting a calf all this time?"

"Have you lost your hounds, General?".

"Lost them—yes! These boys will ruin my hounds. They have been after a fox."

"I saw them," said Hammond, "going along merrily towards Castleacre."

"Deuce take them!" said the General, as he rode off home—to make sad complaints to Lady Elizabeth of the conduct of his boys, "and of Loftus, who ought to have known better, but was as bad as any of them, turning his harriers into fox-hounds." We heard all this afterwards from our hostess and from Hammond, who enjoyed the joke immensely, but not so the

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General, whom we never dared tell we had "bagged a fox." He knew *after* the run that he was saved and brought to Kempston, where we were invited to dine that day. We had a capital dinner, the General, in the highest spirits, telling the tale of the run with so much humour, grumbling ever and anon at his hounds being spoiled; telling us also of his *rencontre* with Hammond with the greatest good nature, and causing roars of laughter.

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CHAPTER VI.

Colonel Wilson of Didlington Hall—A Heronry—The Art of Falconry—Pells, the German Falconer—Luring back a truant Hawk—Lord Conyers Osborne—A Horse warranted quiet with Hounds—Coursing Club—Electioneering Tactics—A Lucky Rencontre—Whigs and Tories—The Rival Candidates.

AMONG the neighbours, at the distance of a ride of two hours and a half, was Colonel Wilson of Didlington Hall—afterwards Lord Berners—who was well known to my family, was often at Raynham, being a friend of the old first Marquis. Didlington was a fine old place, and possessed a heronry. It was curious to watch these long-legged birds flying to the top of the high oaks at the back of the Hall, like so many rooks. The old lord was very kind to us, constantly inviting me to shoot in the season, when we went to stay with him. In the Sum-

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mer we used to ride over to see the hawking. Until I went into that neighbourhood, I knew nothing of the art of Falconry, having only read of it. Large parties went out from the Hall in the Summer evenings to watch for the return of the herons to their home, after feeding. Pells, a German, was the falconer, a good-looking man about five feet ten, slight and active. His dress consisted of a broad-brimmed black hat (of King Charles II.'s time) with a green drooping feather, Lincoln green velvet coat, sleeves slashed with scarlet, gold lace at the wrist and collar; black waist belt and pouch, high leather leggings to above the knee, with jesses and silver whistle, and bells on his wrist—a very handsome dress. On one occasion, being out with a party, my wife and I were much amused hearing Pells swearing in German and English at one of the hawks which had missed the heron and had gone away herself.

"Miss Jane!" cried Pells. "Miss Jane, you jade!" Then whistling and calling to her, "You one devil, Miss Jane—you not come back, you false hussy, miss!"

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"Oh!" said my wife, "that must be my dear old hawk which I gave him, when a young bird, that Pells is swearing at."

This greatly amused the gentlemen around, who knew that the bird had been named after her donor.

I now saw the process of "luring" back a truant hawk—by letting fly a pigeon, with a cord attached to him. As soon as the hawk perceives the pigeon, which the falconer pulls in, he pounces down upon his prey, and both come suddenly to the ground together. The hawk is secured, and his intended quarry is saved from his talons. Had it not been pulled down by the falconer, to save it from the fate threatened by its enemy, it would have still soared to a great height, and on seeing the hawk, which flies direct, would have wheeled and wheeled in many circles before it darted straight for its home. The herons will fly, in great flights, long distances to feed, and return home to their trees. I have seen them coming to feed, near my father's place at Stiffkey, on the river forty miles away from Didlington.

Here I often met two of my cousins, both

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very fond of hawking, the Marquis of Caermarthen and Lord Conyers Osborne, who, poor fellow—a fine, handsome, most amiable and high-spirited young man—was most sadly killed by accident at the University of Oxford, to the great sorrow of all who knew him. When Lord Berners gave up his hawks, Pells went to live with Lord Caermarthen, afterwards Duke of Leeds.

General Fitzroy, seeing an advertisement in the *Times* of two good horses to be sold, asked me one day to go to London with him and see them at Aldridge's, well-known in those days. One, known by the name of "Bob Short," a dark bay, and very handsome, had carried an old gentleman with hounds for some years, and was very quiet. The other, a black, also steady with hounds, had carried the same gentleman, and was a good fencer.

We were to have started for London the following morning, but General Fitzroy changed his mind, and wrote to the man who professed to be the owner of the horses, having bought them for sale, to bring them to Kempston. Accordingly, in a week they were there, and I

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was invited to see them. I rode down, and on arriving at the Lodge, there stood the General at the hall door, looking at the man, who was riding up and down in front, in what was called the park, a fine large piece of pasture ground of several acres, About two hundred yards from the lodge door was a high, very thick holly fence, well kept, and quite an ornament in its bright green, which divided a part of the pasture, and extended to some distance. Between the holly hedge and the hall door the man was riding up and down, showing off his horses. The rider, a stout, thick-set man, wearing a pair of corduroy breeches and brown top-boots, appeared about forty. The General was talking to him as he rode.

"You can warrant him sound, and quiet with hounds?"

"Both, sir," replied the man.

At that moment the General gave a "view holloa!" and exclaimed, "Now let them out!" A side door from the flower and kitchen gardens opened, the horn sounded inside, and giving full tougue out came the hounds. The horse sprang up at this sudden surprise,

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turned sharp round to the left, his head towards the holly fence, at which, *nolens volens*, he charged, passing right through the middle of it, and leaving his unfortunate rider behind flat upon the ground.

"There," said the General—"there is a lying scoundrel for you. This would have been my fate had I been on his back."

For the life of me I could not help laughing, as did everyone present, except the fallen man, to whom it was no joke. I rode up to him, where he was howling by the crushed fence.

"Oh! my back!—my back is broken!"

"Are you hurt?" said I.

"Oh! yes, oh! yes. It's a most unfair proceeding."

By this time the old butler, Breeze the gardener, always wanted in any case, and the footman, ran up to the spot, and began lifting him up, he of course crying out and making a great fuss. He was carried in and put to bed, where he had slept the night before, complaining sorely "that his back must be broke." I rode off to Litcham for the doctor, who came up immediately, and, on examining the unlucky

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man, found no bones broken, but a bad strain across the back. However, in a week's time he was well enough to take his departure with his two horses, which, with their rider, the General had kept for that time, paying the doctor's bill, to boot. "Bob Short" was sold on his way back to London. What became of the black horse and his rider I never heard.

I must not forget the Coursing Club, so well known in Suffolk and Norfolk. All the members belonging to it assembled every November on different properties for their meetings, lasting four days. I myself was not a member, but I managed for Lord Charles, who had several good dogs. There was also a Lady's Cup, run for by ladies who had dogs, and whose husbands belonged to the Club. So many dogs for the Ladies', and so many for the Gentlemen's Cup, were drawn out, and these ran against each other, as they were drawn. People came from all parts for this coursing meeting. In the country contiguous to Swaffham there generally was good sport, from the abundance of hares there, which, to those fond of coursing, afforded a great source of amusement. The

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Westacre field was the best place of meeting. The owner of that estate always gave good sport, and never shot his covers till after the coursing meeting, so that there was no lack of hares. It was wonderful to see the length of time that some of the hares would hold out before the best dogs, ere they reached cover for shelter. The best hares were found to lie out the farthest from covert, showing that they were the strongest.

Belonging to the Club were the Earl of Stradbrooke of Suffolk, Lord Berners, Lord Walsingham, Lord Charles Townshend, Anthony Hammond, Esq., Mr. Fountaine of Narford, Mr. Buckworth of Cley, Mr. Cauldwell of Hilboro', and Mr. Gurney. These gentlemen used to meet at the Club-house at Swaffham, and dine there during the meeting. I was kindly invited to become a member, but I declined, on account of the expense it would lead to. But I accepted the invitation to dine when the matches were made in the evening. The whole affair always wound up with a grand ball in the Swaffham Assembly Room, on the Friday, well attended

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by the neighbourhood, and by those interested in coursing.

In the following year, 1833, the yeomanry cavalry went on duty for two days at a time, at different periods, so as to complete the eight days. It was a bad plan, for the men gained no steady instruction by this mode. In 1834 we went on permanent duty to Lynne, and were inspected by an officer of cavalry at Norwich. Everything went on very peaceably, no stack-burnings or riots that year.

The year of 1835 was a memorable and exciting one in Norfolk, in consequence of the Reform Bill. The county was divided into two divisions, returning two members for East, and two for West Norfolk. For years two violent parties had existed—Whig and Tory. Mr. Coke of Holkham, a gentleman of great influence and large landed property, had always held dominion, as leader of the Whig party, while Lord Wodehouse of Kimberley held sway over the Tories, and Mr. Edmund Wodehouse had been returned member for Norfolk for many years in that interest. We did not dispute the first election for West Norfolk, after the passing of the

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bill, Mr. Coke, with another Whig, walking over the course. But the retirement of Lord Melbourne, and the advent of Sir Robert Peel to office, caused a dissolution of Parliament, and it was resolved not to allow the Whigs to triumph in an undisputed victory.

I was dining at Necton Hall, with my old friend Mr. Mason, who had had a great shooting party. After dinner, sitting round the fire, drinking our claret, there being present the Honourable George Mills, Lord Orford, old Lord Walsingham, and other gentlemen, whose names I cannot recall, all Tories, they began discussing the subject of the election. I was sitting close to the fire, and being tired, had fallen asleep, when I felt my shins kicked by Mr. Mills, who said,

"Loftus, wake up. We want to speak to you. You know there's an election coming on?"

"Yes."

"We are thinking of disputing the course with old Coke. Did you hear that he said at Norwich, in a speech which he made there, that he would return his grey horse for the county, if he pleased?"

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"I heard something of it, but I paid no attention to it."

"But we have a man to bring forward, and we mean to get one of the seats, if we can. He has two members ready, Sir Jacob Astley and Sir William Folkes. He himself will not stand again. But we want you to get your brother, Lord Charles Townshend, to give us his interest and support."

"I am afraid he has been in the Whig interest for years; but I'll go and try," was my response.

"Can you get an answer for us by to-morrow? We are going to meet at Swaffham at one o'clock."

I had taken no interest in politics, and knew little of them; but I hated the Whigs, and especially Mr. Coke, who had been most impertinent to both Townshends and Loftuses, because my father had kept the Whigs out of Yarmouth for many years. The next morning at eight o'clock I was riding Punch on the road to Raynham; and at nine o'clock I was going down the hill by Vere Lodge, when, turning the road, I met a man in livery riding, who touched

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his hat, and looking at him, I saw he was one of Sir Jacob Astley's grooms.

"I think, sir," said he, "I am going right to Lord Townshend's?"

"Yes, there's the house, and I am going there myself."

"Then perhaps, sir, you will be kind enough to give my lord this letter?"

"I will do so—and you had better follow me, and put your horse up, and get some breakfast with the servants."

I guessed immediately what was doing, so, pocketing the letter, I went to the stables, put up my horse, told the man I would acquaint Lord Charles that he had done the same, and we went in. I sent the butler to tell Lord Charles Townshend that I wished to see him directly on business, if possible, and the answer returned was that he would do so in his dressing-room. I thought to myself—what shall I do with this letter? We soon entered upon the subject of my visit.

"That's a pretty go!" said he, "and you're going to oppose Coke."

"Yes—if you'll give us your support."

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"Why, I have been supporting the Whigs for years! And who is your man?"

I then told him all that had passed at Necton the night before, informing him also of old Coke's boast of the power he possessed.

"By St. George," exclaimed his lordship, "that is an impudent speech!"

"And we do not choose to be under Mr. Coke's thraldom any longer," said I; "we mean to have one man, if not two, for West Norfolk."

"Remember," said Lord Charles, "that I know something of elections; if you bring forward but one man, you will fight at a disadvantage. I confess I do not like the acts of these Whigs lately."

"Then give us your support, and we will go in for it. I have promised Mills and Lord Orford" (who was a great friend) "that I would bring them your answer at Swaffham by one o'clock. I am afraid, if you fail us, they won't fight."

"Do you think they will not?"

"I am pretty sure of it."

He walked up and down the room, and then

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stopped, looked at me, and turned again.

"Whom is Mr. Coke going to bring forward?"

"Sir Jacob Astley and Sir William Folkes."

"Two strong men to fight against, with Coke to back them."

"Yes," said I, "and we have some good men to back our side. We have Walsingham, Orford, Mills, Wodehouse, and many of the good squires and clergy!"

"And they have a good advocate in you?" he said.

"I hope you will not support the Radical party, whom this Reform Bill will bring in; and remember your own motto, 'Hæc genera incrementi fides,' and added to that your wife's family motto, 'Loyal au mort.' I hope you will let these fellows see that we shall act up to what our mottoes show that we have deserved, by being loyal and faithful to the institutions of our country."

"By St. George," said he, "you are right! Tell them I'll go with them. They shall have my interest and support as far as I can; but I will not coerce my tenantry."

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"They do not require it—they are Tories, all but one or two."

I lost not a moment. I saw the butler as I went downstairs, and gave him the note (which, in my anxiety, I had really forgotten), and desired him to give it to his master. I had the cup of tea ordered for me, when down comes my brother-in-law in his dressing-gown.

"Look! here's a letter from Astley, asking me for my interest and support."

"Oh!"

"Did you not say he is one of Coke's nominees?"

"Yes."

"What shall I say?—I'll have nothing more to do with him?"

"Tell him you will no longer support the Radical party, and that you mean to give your interest to the Tory or Conservative candidate for the independence of West Norfolk."

"Ah, that will do."

"And moreover, if you will allow me, we'll have a silk banner made with the words, 'Raynham for the independence of West Norfolk,' to be carried by one of your principal tenants?"

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This *was* a *coup* which greatly pleased him.

"Yes, Charles, by all means do so."

With this I left him to write his note to Sir Jacob Astley, and I lost no time in communicating my success to all those interested, who were waiting my arrival at Swaffham. I rode there direct. They were both astonished and amused at my *rencontre* with the servant, and at the manner in which I detained his note. A committee was formed, and steps were taken to enter upon a canvas. I had the Fakenham and Raynham district under my charge, and I lost not an hour in setting the machinery going to secure all the votes I could for William Bagge, Esq., who stood in opposition to Mr. Coke's nominees. Great was the excitement caused by the appearance of Mr. Bagge's address in the Norfolk papers on the following Saturday. We had, fortunately, a very clever agent in Mr. Drake, of Darham; but our registration had not been looked after. That was not the fault of Mr. Drake, but of the Conservative party in not attending to it. The Whigs, on the contrary, under the eye of their skilful general, Mr. Coke, had carefully registered all friends on his in-

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terest. Coke and Astley had for years carried West Norfolk voters against the Tory interest. By this means Mr. Coke had for many years been returned as one of the members for Norfolk, and made West Norfolk a borough of his own.

Mr. Bagge had to show himself in the different market towns of the western division. He had many friends, and considerable interest in the Lynne country, where his family was well known. He himself had a very nice property, Stradsett Hall, six miles from Lynne. He was a good-natured, amiable man, and very popular. He came over to Elmham, to Mr. Mills, and canvassed Holt, and other places, and it was agreed he should go to Fakenham on the market-day, and be introduced to the people there. I had been round to all our neighbouring friends, and requested that they would meet Mr. Bagge. Mr. Coke's property ran from Holkham close up to Fakenham, ten miles, intercepted here and there by the lands of Mr. Lee Warner, Lord Orford, and Sir Willoughby Jones; but it was a Holkham stronghold in the western division.

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As soon as it was known at Holkham that Mr. Bagge was to appear on the market-day, all his friends also mustered. Our party assembled at Lord Charles's, and Mr. Lee Warner and the Conservatives from Walsingham met us on Hempton Green. Lord Walsingham and Lord Orford were at Fakenham. Mr. Bagge and Mr. Mills came with us. Altogether, we mustered a strong force as we passed through the market-place, and drew up opposite to a platform erected outside a barber's shop window on the first floor. I thought the place looked very ricketty, and when we were on it Lord Charles whispered to me that he thought we should presently be pitched into the street; but we had not much time for thinking of that. On the right we heard a great noise, and lo! a waggon, drawn by a mob, shouting "Coke for ever!" approached, and there he was, surrounded by his tenants, Sir Jacob Astley, Sir William Folkes, Archdeacon Bathurst, Mr. J. Hoste of Litcham, and as many friends as he could collect—altogether a goodly number. The market-place was crowded with farmers and gentle-

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men of both sides, all quiet and respectful in their demeanour to everybody. The waggon was drawn up and placed opposite to our platform. Coke, looking very pale and angry, presently came forward to the side of the waggon.

"There ye are!" he shouted, stretching out his arm—"a knot of Tories! I never knew a good man a Tory yet."

"Oh! oh!" from us and the crowd.

He then began to find fault with us for bringing forward a candidate "to disturb the peace of the county."

"But," exclaimed a voice in the crowd, "we want a man of our own; we do not want your grey horse!" which caused a great laugh.

Mr. Coke then began a violent abuse of the Tories, accusing them of being the cause of the National Debt, of the loss of America, and of continuing the war with Napoleon when we ought to have made peace; in fact, laying it on thick and thin, as fast he could, upon the Tories, and all who had opposed Mr. Fox and his own party.

Of course, in reply to all this, there were many cries of "Oh! oh!" and "No! no!" among

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the people, not all his friends there. While I was standing near Mr. Mills and Mr. Lee Warner, with Mr. Drake, our agent, behind, and Mr. Bagge in front to the right of me, I was suddenly pushed forward to the railing of the platform, with the exclamation from several voices, "Go you, Loftus, forward, and give it him!"

I was astounded. "Oh, no," I said—"pray some of you speak."

"No, no, you will do it best. Give it him, Loftus!"

They would not allow me to go back. I was obliged to "face the lion." Taking off my hat, I called politely to Mr. Coke, but he did not answer. I repeated, "Mr. Coke," but now he was chatting with Sir W. Folkes. After calling a third time, he said,

"Well, sir?"

"You said, Mr. Coke, that we were a knot of Tories, and that you never knew a good man a Tory yet. Sir, I am happy to say that *I* know a good many good men who are Tories. I am surrounded at this moment by many good and honourable men who are Tories, and are loyal

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men too, Mr. Coke. Sir, you accuse us of disturbing the peace of the county. We have as much right to 'disturb the peace,' as you call it, of the county as you have. You accuse us, too, of increasing the National Debt and continuing the war—who did more to increase the National Debt than you, partly by stopping the supplies, by prolonging the war, and by hampering the Government in every possible way that you could?"

Not a word did Mr. Coke say in reply, but stood staring at me, while I went on—

"Do you not know, sir, that we had to subsidize Austria and other countries to find men to fight with our troops, and to pay high, too, for our recruits at home. Why, sir, where would you have been but for these bad men that you call us? And I see in your waggon the brother of a gallant officer who fought in the Adriatic, and gained a victory over the French, and he was a Norfolk man, sir—Sir William Hoste. I do not call Mr. Hoste a bad man because he is in your waggon with you." (Immense cheering in the market-place.)

"Give it him, Charley!—that's right, give it to him!"

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"How would you have liked, sir, to see fifty thousand French bivouacking in Holkham Park?—and you, sir, may thank the Tories that they were not there."

Loud cheers, and I thought I had given him enough; not one word did Mr. Coke or his friends venture to say in reply, but stood looking at me.

The moment I had finished speaking (exactly what I have now written), while my friends were congratulating me, Sir Jacob Astley called out, "I want to speak to you, Loftus," and he jumped out of the waggon, followed by Mr. Hoste. I went downstairs and met him; he was very angry.

"I want to speak to you, Loftus. I don't understand your taking that side. I thought you were *my* friend."

"So I am, but if you will be of such a party, and take up with such an old fellow, *I* am not obliged to do the same, you know."

"Come, come," said Hoste, "Loftus is quite right. I am not going to allow you two to quarrel about your opinions."

Sir Jacob cooled directly, I will do him the

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justice to say, shook hands with me, and returned to his party.

Mr. Bagge then came forward, and made a very good address to the people, which was well received and cheered. I do not remember that any other speaker appeared on our side. Sir William Folkes and Sir Jacob Astley then addressed the crowd, and were very temperate in all they said. The waggon drew off, while we adjourned to Mr. Campbell's, on the Basham Road, with its fine old gateway. Here a handsome luncheon had been prepared for us, and we drank to the health of Mr. Bagge, and

> "Confusion to knavish tricks,
> And all such politics."

A barrel of beer disappeared outside amidst many cheers for Bagge, and inside ale was served to the domestics. Lord Charles's coachman became so "merry" over the glorious Conservative meeting in the servants' hall that he was too elated to sit on the box, and had to be put to bed, while I drove the carriage home, cheered on the way through Fakenham, where everyone was in hopeful spirits.

We lost no time in making use of the inform-

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ation we received from our agents in different places, who were endeavouring to ascertain what chance we had of succeeding in returning one member for West Norfolk. I cannot say that I felt very hopeful upon the subject, though others were so. But I did the best I could. During my canvass I was informed by a friend that there was an intention upon the part of the Whigs to damage us as much as possible by making statements to the effect that Lord Charles Townshend had "demanded" all the votes of his tenantry, in other words, "had coerced them in favour of Mr. Bagge," by these rumours setting up the backs of the Raynham people against their landlord. Upon receiving information of this unfounded report, I rode to Raynham, saw Lord Charles, and told him all I had heard, and what I conceived was the object—viz., to create an unpleasant feeling among his tenantry, that they were not allowed to act as they wished, knowing how touchy every Englishman is, more or less, as to his independence, and gave him my opinion—"at once to put an end to this kind of proceeding."

"I have not asked," Lord Charles said in

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reply, "never have asked one of them for a vote, nor do I intend to do so. I mean to vote myself for Mr. Bagge, but I have no intention of coercing my tenants."

"Have you any objection to my taking a note round to your people, stating your intention, and that you wish them to understand that you in no way wish to bias them in regard to their vote?"

"No, certainly not."

He then wrote the following circular, as far as my memory serves me, in these words:—

"Raynham, January, 1835.

"Lord Charles Townshend has requested his relative, Captain Charles Loftus, to communicate to the tenants on the Raynham estate that he intends to vote for Mr. Bagge, and to give him his support by so doing; but he begs the tenants will understand that he in no way wishes to influence them in regard to their votes. He leaves them in every way to act as they please concerning their votes."

He signed, and I witnessed this document.

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I then took a horse and gig, and with the Rev. Mr. Potter, my brother's curate at South Raynham, drove round and left a copy with each tenant, as far as we could, that afternoon, and the next day concluded the tour among them. The day following I went to Stiffkey, Morston, and Holt, where many promises were made to vote for us. The Messrs. Brereton of Blakeney, wealthy merchants, were strong adherents of Mr. Bagge.

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CHAPTER VII.

Midnight Journey on Election Business—The Nomination—Banners and Mottoes—The Power of Flattery on Small Freeholders—False Charge of Coercion—Duel Prevented—Whig Triumph—Lord Melbourne's Carriage—Practical Joke—Disturbance among the Agricultural Labourers—Services of the Yeomanry Cavalry—The Chevalier Mechado—His Foreign Guests.

AFTER having canvassed this neighbourhood for five days, I returned home. One night, just as I was going to bed, there came a loud ring at the door bell, and there was Mr. Mills wishing to see me instantly. He said it was necessary that we should see Mr. Bagge immediately, upon the subject of some questions which he had been asked regarding the repeal of the malt duty, or something of that kind. Mr. Mills said that he himself had been asked questions which he could not answer on the part of Mr. Bagge, till he knew what he would do, and that some people said they would not

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vote for him till they were made acquainted with his opinions. This was unpleasant news in the midst of a canvass, and it was very disagreeable to have to ride twenty miles on a dark night to Lynn. However, I ordered old "Punch" to be saddled, and soon was off with Mr. Mills. We had to go round by Necton, to see Mr. Mason, and on to Swaffham, passing through the village on the Nelton Road, on the right of which is a large pond. Mr. Mills, not being aware that it was so close to the road, went right into it, while I, knowing its whereabouts, kept clear of it.

We arrived at Necton very late, and roused up Colonel Mason, one of our party, who possessed considerable influence in our cause. We stated our case, asked his opinion "what we should say to Mr. Bagge," and then rode on to Swaffham. We lost ourselves trying a short cut through his park, the night being so miserably dark. At Swaffham it commenced to rain, and we decided upon sending our horses home, and taking a post-chaise, in which we went comfortably to sleep till we reached Stradsett Hall, where we found that Mr. Bagge was at Lynn with a

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relative. It was three o'clock in the morning ere we found him and had our interview. We got a very satisfactory solution of the difficulty from Mr. Bagge, who ordered some refreshment for us, which, after our midnight ride, was indeed most grateful. Once more in the post-chaise, at five o'clock, we reached Raynham at seven o'clock, where Mr. Mills dropped me, to see how all was going on, while he proceeded to Elmham. Here, at breakfast, Lord Charles told me that Sir Jacob had come to see him two days before, requesting his vote and interest. Lord Charles told him "that he should vote for Mr. Bagge himself; but that he should not coerce his tenantry." He lent me a horse, on which I rode home.

The following week, the nomination took place at Swaffham. Lord Charles came to me, and my wife and I went with him to the hustings. There was no town hall at that time finished, and we had to assemble on a platform outside the ball room windows, ascending to which we saw the whole space of the street in front filled with people, supporters of both parties, the Whigs on the left, the tenantry of Mr. Coke and

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others on horseback, while on the right our party mustered in the same manner. It really was a fine sight, as from four to five thousand people were said to be present, with banners and mottoes inscribed. Our colours were very handsome, pink and purple, and those of the Whigs a dirty dingy green. I got many votes through the influence of the small freeholders' wives, by giving them a bow. Among the most conspicuous banners was one carried by the son of one of the Raynham tenants, made of blue silk, inscribed in gilt letters, "Raynham and the independence of West Norfolk." Another was borne aloft by a man of my own, a flag of royal blue, the Bible on one side, and beneath it the words, "Fear God and honour the King," while on the reverse was, "Protestant ascendancy, and no surrender." A third banner, of red silk, had inscribed on it the legend, "Honi soit qui mal y pense." I saw nothing significant of loyalty among the dirty green colours of our Whig opponents. Mr. Frederic Keppel, when he saw the "Honi soit, &c.," was furious. My old school-fellow attacked me because in canvassing an old woman for the vote of her

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good man, he not being within, she asked me, "What did I think of them there Whigs? She had heard quare things about them, something about their going to bring they Roman Cath'lics into power back again, and then there would be bloodshed like Queen Mary's time, which she had read of."

"Quite true," I said, "and I should not wonder if they brought the Pope over here."

"Lawks, sir, why, you don't say so?—that wicked man. When Mr. Keppel comes again, as he does, after my John, I'll tell him he shan't have his vote."

It so happened that Mr. Keppel called the next day, when she gave him "a bit of her mind." When she allowed him to get in a word, he asked her who told her all that? and she answered, "That good man, Captain Loftus, and I know he speaks the truth, and that's more than you Whig gentlemen do; and he's a loyal man, and we won't have no Popery here." I was told all this by one of the Fransham farmers, who, to his amusement, overheard the whole thing.

I have "stolen away" from the hustings,

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where Sir William Folkes was nominated by one of his friends, and seconded by Mr. Keppel. Sir Jacob was nominated by Mr. Gurden, and Mr. Bagge by Colonel Mason, seconded, I think, by Mr. Lee Warner.

The row then began. Sir Jacob Astley, in his speech, made a flourish of trumpets about our having mustered so strong; "and no wonder, when noble lords" (and he looked at Lord C. Townshend) "coerced their tenantry, and drove them to the poll."

"Name! name!" from our people, and shouts of disapprobation from our party.

"Yes," said Mr. Keppel, "like rotten sheep!" an expression which caused greater uproar, with repeated cries of "name! name!"

Sir Jacob said, "Lord Charles Townshend."

Upon this, Lord Charles stepped forward, and said,

"I deny the fact, sir! I did nothing of the kind."

The moment I had an opportunity, I went forward to the front, and seeing, among the horsemen before me, almost all the Raynham tenants, I called to them "to come to the front,"

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and as I saw there was a good feeling among the crowd to make way for them, my call was instantly responded to.

"Now, gentlemen, I wish to call your attention to what has been said by Sir Jacob Astley, who says you were coerced and driven to the poll by your landlord."

"*It's not true!*" was the general cry.

"Answer me, now, like men, and I am sure that you will do so" (and I drew the paper from my pocket) "And will you listen to this?"

There was dead silence, while I read to them the copy of the circular, and while I added,

"Did you not receive this from me on the part of Lord Charles?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did either he or I ask one of you for a vote for Mr. Bagge?"

"No, sir, neither of you."

Turning to Sir Jacob, I said,

"Now, Sir Jacob, so much for your statement."

He made no reply.

Mr. Bagge having made his speech, the hustings party broke up, and the horsemen disap-

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peared, while I went to seek Mrs. Loftus in some house, looking on at these proceedings. Soon after, in crossing the market-place, I was accosted by a gentlemanly-looking man, a stranger to me, who, raising his hat, said he wished to speak to me. He introduced himself as Major Keppel, the present Earl of Albemarle, I believe, and said he had been sent by Sir Jacob Astley to Lord Charles Townshend, with a message—to desire an apology from him for contradicting him on the hustings.

"But it is quite true," I said. "Lord Charles never did coerce his tenantry. You heard what I read?"

"Yes, I did."

"Surely that is sufficient denial of his statement?"

"Yes; but Sir Jacob is offended, because he thinks the denial amounted to giving him the lie!"

"Oh! no," I said. "Perhaps you are not aware that Sir Jacob is a little deaf, and Lord Charles speaks very low in general."

"Oh! I think that you and I can prevent it coming to a fight."

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"I shall be very happy to do anything in my power to assist in that."

"In the meantime, I must tell you," said Mr. Keppel, "they are both bound to keep the peace for a month."

"Oh! are they? I am glad of that," I said.

"If we cannot settle the matter before, we must meet at Calais this day month."

My brother had referred Major Keppel to me, and no one could be more gentlemanlike and amiable than he was, and when we parted I at once sought Lord Charles at Mr. Hanbury's, where, the lower part of the house being occupied by our opponents, I found him upstairs, in a very disconsolate mood.

"Here is a pretty conclusion to a nomination!" he exclaimed.

I told him all that I had heard from Major Keppel, and took him home to Little Dunham for the night.

After this very unpleasant affair, the polling day arrived. Sir Jacob Astley and Sir William Folkes were returned for West Norfolk, and we had learnt a lesson not again to fight with odds—one man against two opponents; but we

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were not disheartened. We saw that there was a strong feeling towards emancipating the county from a weak thraldom, and moreover we had gained much information in regard to the true strength of our party.

In a week's time I received a letter from Major the Honourable E. Keppel, asking me if he had, at Swaffham, understood from me that Lord C. Townshend had refused to retract, or to apologise to Sir Jacob Astley for, the imputation he had cast upon his veracity. In reply, I said that Major Keppel had correctly stated what I had said: that Lord C. Townshend had refused to retract or apologize to Sir Jacob Astley, nor did I conceive that a simple misunderstanding of the words used could in any way be regarded as an imputation on the veracity of Sir Jacob Astley, who had evidently left Raynham, after his interview with Lord Charles at Vere Lodge, under the impression that he had said "that he would," instead of "that he would not coerce, and never had coerced his tenantry, in giving their votes."

In consequence of my reply, I received a very kind note from Major Keppel, saying that my

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explanation was perfectly satisfactory, and requesting my permission to publish the correspondence, to which I readily consented; and thus ended the misunderstanding which threatened to have a serious termination. I am sorry to add that this contest produced, for the time, much unpleasant feeling between the parties opposed to each other. Lord Walpole, with Mr. Edmund Wodehouse, had been returned for East Norfolk.

I have omitted to mention in its proper place a curious circumstance that happened during our canvass in the west. I went round Fakenham, Raynham, Hellhoughton, &c., taking with me some placards and a man with a paste-pot and brush. Whenever I saw a convenient place, I made the man alight and paste up, "Vote for Bagge." I had also one placard inscribed, "To be seen at the 'Crown Inn,' Swaffham, every evening, at seven o'clock, the Siamese twins, sitting in judgment upon every bag-man who enters the town," *i.e.*, the twins, Sir J. Astley and Sir W. Folkes, whose committee room was in the Inn. In order to obtain some refreshment, as well as to bait my horse, I had stopped at the hotel

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just outside Raynham Park gates, and was on the point of ordering out my gig, when a carriage and four drove up, containing no less a personage than Lord Melbourne with another gentleman, on the way to Holkham. They alighted, as did two servants from the rumble, and I heard them order some coffee. The idea struck me what fun it would be were I to paste these two of my placards on the back of the Lord Melbourne's rumble, which would be concealed, on their departure, by the coat capes hanging over it, and send them to Holkham with "Vote for Bagge, &c.," displayed on the back of the carriage. I gave directions to my man, and in two minutes the deed was done and I drove home. Some time after, I heard that the coats being taken off at Holkham the trick was discovered. The servants carried in an exact account of it, and amid roars of laughter, the story flew from mouth to mouth, and created great mirth. Nor did anyone guess how or when the placards had got there! The postilions carried back the news to the Raynham Hotel, where great amusement was created. Sir Jacob Astley was so

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sore with Mr. Mills and all of us, that he resigned his command of the Melton troop of cavalry, and Mr. Brereton, who resided near Holt, was appointed the captain. Other changes were also consequent upon Sir Jacob's resignation.

In 1835 reports reached us that the labourers were meeting in the neighbourhood of Docking, and showed symptoms of a disposition to rioting. At eleven o'clock on the night after this news reached me, a man on horseback arrived from Mr. Derrick Hoste to say that there had been a riot at Docking, where the labourers had attacked the farmhouse close by, and that everyone was in the greatest alarm. A note was also given to me, requesting me to bring my troop of cavalry, and to entreat the Major-Commandant, the Honourable George Mills, to bring up all the men he could with the other troops to the scene of disturbance. I lost no time in sending off mounted men to Major Mills, to Serjeant Diggins at Raynham, and to Mr. Case of Testerton House, to give notice to all the men of the Raynham troop to assemble on Hempton Green in marching order as soon as possible.

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One of the farmers sent a man and horse with a note from me to the adjutant at Holt, twenty miles away. This man took the same note to Elmham Hall, as he passed, informing Major Mills of the order. The Reverend Mr. Hall of Cressingham, who was staying with me, rode off to Hillboro' to inform Mr. Caldwell, my cornet, of what was stirring, at the same time desiring him to repair to Hempton Green, and bring with him three Swaffham men. I then started off myself, pistol in holsters, cartridges in my pouch, in marching order. I knew where all my men lived, and called on them on my way, and they sent off messengers to others, not far distant; so the news flew like the wind, and all the country side in a short time was up.

Soon after six in the morning, five and thirty members of my troop, comprising fifty-six men, met me at Hempton, and at half-past six all were present but one man. Major Mills came up with the Elmham and Dereham people, and my brother, Captain Frederick Loftus, brought up the remainder, the adjutant also arriving with forty Holt men. We marched for Bircham, on the other side of Houghton Hall, where we

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halted and dismounted, sending a private messenger into Docking, who, when he returned, told us that all was now quiet, that there had been some attempt to riot, but that the coast-guard men at Lynn, and other places, had come up in the night, and had prevented it. We were requested, however, to march into Docking to show ourselves, which we did, drawing up in front of the inn, where we halted two hours, so many men dismounting at a time to get refreshment. I was sorry to learn that Mr. Davey, a magistrate, had been injured by a stone, thrown by some low and cowardly fellow, for such men invariably run away after the performance of their unmanly exploit.

Our appearance had a good effect, for men who were standing about in groups, talking of the attempt at riot, and planning mischief, dispersed almost at once. We left our troop at Bircham for the night, and the rest proceeded to the stables at Houghton, which being empty, there was room for all the horses. We got some cold beef and sandwiches at Docking and Bircham, a provision with which we were satisfied. Major Mills slept that night by the side of

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his horse, as he did at Quatrebras on the night previous to Waterloo, when man and horse had their bed on the damp earth, many of them, before the setting of the next day's sun, to sleep the sleep of death there.

Everything passed off quietly. The labourers who had created this disturbance were wonderfully surprised when they saw the soldiers coming, and so promptly, too, from far and wide (indeed, we were much praised for our activity and zeal in assembling from all parts of the county on so short notice), and would not believe they were Yeomanry Cavalry, but the Dragoons from Norwich, our dress, as I have described, being that of heavy Dragoons, and completely deceiving the yokels. At noon the following day a troop of the 17th Lancers came from Norwich, and our corps marched home. The Lancers took up their quarters at Lynn, but twenty men and an officer were sent to Fakenham, where they remained for some time.

In the Spring of 1836 we were again called out to quell an expected riot near Cromer, occasioned by the dislike some of the people had taken to the building of a new poor-house.

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Lord Sondes was in London, but I was at Raynham, oddly enough. Mr. Flavell, magistrate of Holt, sent a request to me to assemble my troop and bring them there. My man, whom I fortunately met at the hotel outside Raynham, where I was conversing with a gentleman who had come to see the old Hall, brought my accoutrements, &c., in a gig. I immediately sent off messages to the men of the troop, and having accoutred myself and my horse, I set off across the park to Diggins, while, fortunately for me, my good friend Wood, who had come from Morston to Hempton Green Fair, came on to Raynham to meet me, with his usual energy and promptitude, on his beautiful black mare. He then rode back to the Green, where he found thirty of our men, who, being informed that they were needed, started home and dressed themselves, and in an hour were ready, enabling me to march out of Fakenham, with my two trumpeters, Samuel Tuttle and Jonas Wright, playing their bugles to the tune of "The British Grenadiers." Wood then rode off home, fourteen miles farther to Morston, dressed, and joined me at the foot of Holt Hill at six in the evening.

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In Holt we found many of the troop assembled waiting for us, under Captain Gurling, Adjutant. I reported myself to Mr. Flavell, who was much pleased with our prompt obedience to his summons. Two gentlemen offered to reconnoitre the poor-house, and discover what was going on there. Curiously enough, the news of our arrival had preceded them, and the valiant mob who had assembled "to do and dare" any kind of mischief, had taken mortal fright on hearing the fearful news that I had "brought with me plenty of ball cartridges, to shoot down the rioters as I would partridges!" —an idea which made them quickly take to their heels.

This terrible story arose in this way. Seeing a number of idlers staring and jeering at us in the market-place, I said to Diggins, "Serve out the cartridges to the troop, and mind, no man must miss his aim." One man, hearing this, exclaimed, "What a bloody-minded man!—now hear that!" while another rejoined, "Yes, and he's just the one to keep his word, too, and do it." So before the tale reached the scene of action, it had grown to this proportion

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—that I had brought with me plenty of ball cartridges, "to shoot down the rioters as I would partridges."

We returned home next morning, leaving all quiet behind us.

The year's shooting and hunting succeeded each other, as usual. Lord Charles and I receiving an invitation to shoot the Didlington coverts, Mrs. Loftus and my little daughter went to my sister at Raynham, and we set out from Dunham. We had been at Lord Berners', whose nephew, my friend Vincent Eyre, had succeeded Mr. Potter as my brother's curate at South Raynham. We had capital sport with our guns, Eyre showing us every attention for his uncle, who did not go out with us; but the weather became intensely cold, and there was a heavy fall of snow. Letters were received from Raynham, which called us home sooner than we had expected. Lord Charles wished me to see the Chevalier Mechado, who had hired the Hall and the shooting, regarding which he had been very generous in giving up half of it to Lord Charles, who had planted very judiciously around Raynham, and was exceedingly

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desirous to keep down the rabbits, which would injure the young plants. He had employed warreners for that purpose, but by mistake these men had gone on to the property of the Chevalier, who had preserved them for the arrival of some foreign friends for a grand battue.

I went to the Hall the next morning, at Lord Charles's request, to explain how all this had occurred. No one could be more gentlemanly and kind than was the Chevalier, who invited me to dine and sleep at the Hall, and, curiously enough, I found myself in my mother's room, in the bed in which I was born. The dinner passed off most pleasantly, my fellow-guests being two Italian Counts, a Spaniard, and an English officer. As we sat up late, a supper of oysters and real Roman punch was brought in. My entertainer and his guests had heard I could sing, and pressed me to gratify them with a song. Finding, from their conversation, that the Italians belonged to the Republican party of Italy, I struck up, "O bella Napoli che forma un grande giardino." When I came to the part, "Viva il Principe, la constituzione, viva la Napoli!" they jumped up one and all, ran

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round the table, embraced and hugged me, till I thought that they would choke me, while they vociferated, "Bravo, Inglese!" They drank glasses of Roman punch, and one by one they disappeared. The English officer and myself thought it best to go upstairs and look after them, to make sure that their candles were put out. Going into the Spanish Count's room, we heard a noise of splashing water, and lo! there was he, tumbled on his face into a cooling bath placed for his morning ablutions, out of which we got him, took off his wet clothes, and put him to bed singing "Bella Napoli."

Shortly after our return home, I made arrangements for leaving my present abode at Dunham, and having looked over a small property at Billingford, near Elmham, not far from Lord James's, with about ninety acres of land, I made up my mind to purchase it, and put the house in repair. I bought implements of husbandry, carts, waggons, horses, &c., moved all my goods from Dunham, and went there to reside in April, 1836. I have often regretted that I did so. It is true that when I began farming it occupied much of my time, but hav-

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ing been brought forward to take part in the politics of 1835, for the western division of my county, I soon saw that the party in whom I interested myself did not intend to allow me to remain quietly at my ease. Our agent, Mr. Drake, of East Dereham, had very properly begun to look after the registration of those entitled to vote.

One market day, being at Norwich, where nearly all the gentlemen in the neighbourhood generally resorted, I was accosted by Mr. Mills and Mr. Buckworth of Clay Hall, who informed me that it was the intention of the Conservatives to give a dinner to Mr. Bagge, at Lynn, as they were anxious to discover the strength of our party, by bringing them more together, and I was requested to take the chair upon the occasion. I consented to do so, and the dinner took place the following week. I was walking to the Town-hall between my brother-in-law and Mr. Mills, the band of Wombwell's show happening to be before us, when I heard, on my left, a window thrown up, and a voice exclaimed, "Well, so, Charlie, you are going to feed the wild beasts," a remark

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which made us all laugh. The voice was that of my friend Captain Fitzroy, who was a Whig, and all I could say was to invite him to come and join in the "feeding," which passed off well, and in every way that I could desire. There was so large a gathering of our friends, that I saw there would be a better chance of our success in another contest than I had expected, the party that assembled in favour of Mr. Bagge being very strong. On my right sat the Earl of Orford, and on my left, Mr. Bagge. Lord Walsingham, Mr. Mills, Lord C. Townshend, Colonel Mason, Villebois, the Rev. Mr. Phayre of Raynham, my good and valued friend, who, I am happy to say, is still living and at Raynham, the Rev. Mr. Wodehouse, the Rev. Charles Campbell, Mr. Robert Campbell, the Rev. Mr. Tacey, my old friend, and many more influential gentlemen, adherents of Mr. Bagge's family, who had considerable property and interest at Lynn. Nothing could exceed the enthusiasm of all upon the occasion. The Rev. C. Campbell, on returning thanks for the bishops and clergy of the diocese, made, I remember, a most admirable address, recounting, with a great deal of

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humour, events relative to the last contest in the latter part of his speech, which kept the whole company in a roar of laughter. As I have already said, we had Wombwell's band in the gallery (for the wild "bastes" were in Lynn), and excellent musicians they were.

In the Spring, I had a very bad attack in my poor eye, from which I had suffered so often, and at the end of April, 1837, I went to Cheltenham, with Mrs. Loftus and my child, and there I soon recovered from it.

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CHAPTER VIII.

Canvass of West Norfolk—Tired of the Whigs—The Nomination—Green *v.* Pink and Purple—Election Tactics—Plot to carry me off—The Whigs outmanœuvred—Conservative Triumph—Chairing of the Members—Sir Jacob Astley's Generosity—A London Baronet caught in a Man-Trap—Poachers—Resignation of Lord Sondes—Serious Fall—Sixty Miles' Ride.

ONE morning in the middle of June, while dressing, my servant came to say that Lord Sondes wished to see me immediately, on rather important business. Mr. Mills, now Lord Sondes by the death of his father, was our Conservative leader, and had posted from London all night, to request me to return to Norfolk, and take the management of the western election, for, King William the Fourth being dead, the sooner that the Conservative party began their canvass the better chance had we of success.

I told Lord Sondes that I was ready to do

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anything in my power for the good cause; but that I feared my so doing would create a feeling of jealousy among some of the esquires who were large proprietors, whereas I was but a small owner of land.

"Never mind that," he replied, "you have more tact and judgment, and are more popular than any of them; that's the fact."

It ended by my consenting to return home. We went to breakfast, and then sallied forth in search of Mr. Chute, who was spending his honeymoon at Cheltenham, and, of course, he voted us great bores; but, nevertheless, we made him promise to pack up bag and baggage, and with his bride be off to Norwich in two days' time. I, leaving my family, started off with my lord for London, which we reached late in the evening.

I went to the Tower to my old friend Elrington, and slept there. The following morning, Lord Sondes again appeared, urging me to start immediately, which I lost no time in doing. There was no railway in those days into Norfolk, so I posted down to East Dereham, where I found Mr. Drake, our agent, and

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we sat up all that night, arranging our plans, writing letters to the different quarters of our division, to the chairman of the committee of each district, informing them that I had been requested to take the management of the forthcoming election, and begging them to commence a canvass for Messrs. Bagge and Chute, and to send to Mr. Drake returns of promises made every Thursday, which they one and all agreed to, and fulfilled. The canvass was brisk on both sides. I had two post-chaises at my command, and plenty of work for both of them, besides my own horses, having the whole of the district from Fakenham to Wells, Weasenham, all the Rudhams, Sculthorpe, Masingham, Hindringham, Binham, Morston, Stiffkey, Tittleshall, Gressenham, Dereham, Wellingham, Litcham, Gate's End, Shareford, and the Raynhams, including Taterford. I felt greatly interested in rescuing all these places from the long-continued predomination of Whig influences, Mr. Coke having considerable property in and around that part of the county. Our time was much occupied in ferreting out our friends from our foes; and I can say, with truth, that

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I did not sleep six times in my own house during the whole of the canvass. The Messrs. Brereton of Blakeney, merchants of influence, worked very hard for Mr. Bagge, and managed well the whole district of Holt. Mr. Bagge had much influence in the Lynn district, and was made secure in that part of the county by the able assistance of Mr. Bowker, and others. I went with Mr. Chute to Holt, Blakeney, &c., and I took Mr. Bagge to Gunthorpe Hall, and introduced him to the Reverend Mr. Sparkes, brother-in-law of Sir Jacob Astley, who was furious with me when he heard of our doings. Nor was his party idle. A few days after, while returning from Morston, where I had gone on horseback to see my friend, Mr. Wood, who rendered us throughout the most valuable assistance, as I was passing through Field-Dalling, I saw Mr. Upcher standing at his gate, which opened into the road, holding up his finger to me. I joined him.

"I am so glad to see you," said he. "There is an old freeholder over there, of about fifty or sixty acres of land, who boasts 'that he has voted for Coke and Astley for forty years

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past.' Now it will be a grand thing to get hold of him; and if any man can do it, that man is yourself."

I turned my horse's head down the lane leading to the house, and after passing through a pasture-field, rode up to the door. I was met by the wife, who sent a man to put up my horse, and invited me in, telling me that "her John" would be indoors in a few minutes, asking me at the same time to take a cup of tea with her, which I did not refuse. John soon made his appearance; and we entered upon the subject of my visit. After many questions and remarks on both sides, he told me that he had been greatly deceived by the Whigs, for whom he would no longer vote. He would be at Fakenham on the polling day, and would bring two other voters with him. We shook hands, and I rode off.

I had scarcely been gone ten minutes, when Sir Jacob Astley drove up, to remind him that the polling-day was fixed for the next week, and he should send a man to fetch him. Great was the indignation of the Baronet when informed of his promise to me, and hearing that I had

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only just quitted the house, he set off at full gallop after me. Fortunately we did not meet, as I took the road home to the left, and he that to the right.

Many were the contrivances that were put in practice to get votes away from either side. Some of *our* people were fairly kidnapped, and disappeared altogether till after the election. The nomination took place on Saturday, when there was an immense assembly in front of the hustings. Our friends met on the Lynn Road, about a mile out of Swaffham, and there we waited for Mr. Bagge and Mr. Chute. I was mounted on a very handsome horse of my own, his breastplate and bridle decorated with the pink and purple ribbons, as, indeed, were about three hundred Conservative horsemen, whom I headed, at their request, into the town, the band playing, "See the conquering hero comes!" It is needless to say that we had the *vox populi* with us, while our opponents had nothing to show but a display of their dingy, revolutionary green flag.

I took up my place amongst the horsemen on the right of the hustings, where I could see

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everything. Our pink and purple colours, grouped together, had a very pretty effect, and we certainly made a very imposing appearance, and I was inspired with great hopes of success. The motto "Raynham, and the independence of West Norfolk," was most conspicuous. A friend of mine, whom I had mounted, came down from London to witness our battle, and as he was sitting beside me, he remarked, "You will win, for you have all the people with you!" Loud indeed were the cheers among those on foot for the pink and purple.

While looking on, Colonel Bloomfield called to me to dismount, and come up to the hustings, where they awaited my arrival, to nominate Mr. Chute, who, it appeared, had written me a letter, which I had never received. Joining my friends, the business commenced. Colonel Mason nominated Mr. Bagge, and I, Mr. Chute, who was seconded by Sir Thomas Hare. Mr. Gurdon nominated Sir Jacob Astley, who was seconded by Mr. Frederick Keppel. This gentleman unfortunately stuttered, and spoke into his hat, in which he held his written speech, a fact of which the people soon became aware, for they

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called out, "Put on your hat. Don't read your speech out of it!" which put him out of temper, and created much laughter. One of the Holkham party nominated Sir W. Folkes.

In the front of our hustings, at the extreme end of our line of horsemen, fifty or sixty seamen from Lynn, in their blue jackets, and white trousers, carrying the Union Jack, stood on each side of a large model frigate, which they had dragged from Lynn on wheels. Everything passed off quietly, without any disputes. When all was over, I went with the Raynham tenantry to our hotel, and had some refreshment with them, then mounted my horse, and rode back among them to Raynham. We were overtaken by the Dowager Lady Astley, and other ladies, in a carriage and four, and we took off our hats as they passed. I thought that they looked very cross at me, for which I was very sorry. The Dowager had always been kind to me, but it could not be helped.

I reached home very late, and went to bed, glad to get a little rest and quiet. The next morning, being Sunday, I rose early, and went to my friend Mr. Tacey's church, at Swanton

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Morley, after which I took up my quarters with him, to be quiet, not dreaming that anyone would think it worth while to trace me out. I retired early to bed on the Sunday night, when everything was shut up for the night at ten o'clock. I had not been asleep more than half an hour, when Mr. Tacey's man awoke me, saying that there was a post-chaise at the gate waiting for me. On my telling him to inquire whence it came, he returned with a letter, which, on opening, I found ran thus:

"DEAR SIR,—I am sorry to inform you that two hundred of your voters for West Norfolk are confined in different places, so as to prevent their voting on Tuesday at the election. If you will come back with the bearer, I will take means to assist you towards their release. This is confidential.

"Sincerely yours,

"SAMUEL BIGNOLD."

As soon as I had read the letter I looked carefully at it, and it appeared to me not to be in the handwriting of Mr. Bignold. But it did not occur to me what might be the object of the

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letter. I thought it best, therefore, to take it to Mr. Tacey, and show it to him; so I went to his room, and he read it two or three times. At last I asked—

"What do you think? Shall I go?"

He was sitting up in his bed, with a long night-cap standing up on end, drawn over his head; and looking up at me, he gravely said—

"Go, you fool! Don't you see what they mean? It is you whom they wish to confine, so that you may not be able to bring up your people at Fakenham on Tuesday. Go, indeed!"

And it is true that, but for Mr. Tacey, I should certainly have been kidnapped, and kept out of the way till after the election. However, I sent a message to the man with the chaise to say that I would be at Dereham at eight in the morning. You will ask, what was the object of sending the post-chaise? The intention was to show me into it, that when a short way on the journey I might be secured by two stout men, who were to follow me. When the chaise was gone, the old servant came to tell me that, on going back to the carriage the second time, he saw two men standing behind the tree close to

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the carriage, evidently waiting for my coming out. Subsequently one of their own party told me who had employed these men, and the whole plot was revealed.

Dining at Melton some years afterwards, the subject of the election of 1837 came upon the *tapis*, and I was requested to relate the story. I soon perceived from their manner that they knew more about it than I did, but wished to find out how much I knew. Of course, my account amused them very much, as I intended that it should, and made as much fun of it as I could. Though I opposed Sir Jacob in politics, I was sure that he bore no malice against me. On the Tuesday morning, very early, I repaired to Raynham Hall, where Lord C. Townshend had returned from abroad, and was now residing. Here all the voters in the Conservative cause belonging to the Raynhams, and places contiguous, assembled at eight o'clock for breakfast, consisting of coffee, tea, cold meats, &c., laid out for all comers. A great number of Lord Charles's tenantry came to the rendezvous. We moved off before nine, and

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trotted down to Hempton Green, where we met a large assemblage of Conservative voters with a band of music, and plenty of colours flying, with Colonel Fitzroy from Sennowe Lodge, others from Ryburgh and Kettlestone, and those who voted in the Fakenham district. When all were ready, we moved off, and entered the town by the Wells Road, where we met other voters from Stiffkey, Basham, Binham, Whiting, Walsingham, and other places, with Mr. Lee Warner, who rode with me. I ordered the band to strike up "God save the Queen," and in a moment every man's hat was off. We were loudly cheered, even by some of our opponents. We were the first party in the town. I collected two hundred horsemen, induced my friends, and others interested, to get them to the poll as soon as possible, while, with the other two hundred and the band, I went down to meet the party coming from Blakeney, Holt, &c., under the management of the Messrs. Brereton.

On reaching the point where the roads meet, the right leading to Melton Constable, I drew up my horsemen and band across the road in two ranks, leaving the Holt Road open. I soon

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heard that party approaching, and rode forward to request them to come on as fast as possible, as I was desirous of their arrival before that of Sir Jacob, for I knew that they would be at some of them whom they had endeavoured to get away from us. The leading Holt men soon came up, and a few minutes after Sir Jacob Astley's people likewise; but, having placed my horsemen across the road, the Holt party united with us, we completely blocked up the way. Our opponents in the rear kept on sending forward inquiries as to the reason of the delay. I tried to keep out of sight of the Astleys, but Frank, Sir Jacob's brother, driving a four-in-hand drag, caught sight of me, and called out to his friends behind him, "That confounded fellow, Loftus, is doing it all. He has out-manœuvred us!" However, we moved on, and I saw no more of them. The polling went on till late in the day most briskly, and closed at five o'clock.

Meanwhile I had driven to Hindringham in a chaise, and brought up five of our men, who were good Conservatives, but afraid to be seen voting against the Coke and Astley inter-

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est. At nine o'clock that night I got the men from Swaffham, and Dereham, and Lynn, and found that Mr. Bagge was quite safe, but I did not feel quite so sure of Mr. Chute's success. On going into the committee-room, and looking over the lists, I found that more than thirty voters had not yet come from our district. At three o'clock the next morning my old friend, Mr. Wood, and I took three post-chaises, and by ten o'clock we had sent up more than twenty voters to Fakenham, and, moreover, sent off to all the other polling places, and begged our people not to stop till the full time of closing, and to lay hold of every man of ours whom they could, to vote for Mr. Chute, so as to make him quite safe. The result of these exertions was that, at the conclusion of the two days' poll allowed by act of Parliament for the record of votes, the Conservative party carried the day by a majority of five hundred and thirty odd votes, and we beat the Whigs out of the field. Great was their astonishment at this unaccustomed defeat! It was long before they dared to confess the result to Mr. Coke.

The chairing of our members took place on

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Friday, in the market-place, at Swaffham. We mustered in great force upon that occasion, our two members appearing—you may laugh, but these were old times—in court-dress, powdered hair, bag wig and sword, silk stockings, gold knee and shoe buckles. They "astonished the natives!" as they were carried on men's shoulders in two gilt arm-chairs—for these, ladies fair, were the days when gentlemen, in full dress, went to balls in "pumps," shoes, not boots; wore vests different from those of their morning costume, did not run their gloved hand through their well-oiled hair, and present to you the same glove when asking you to dance! Everything passed off as well as we could desire. The sailors' frigate reappeared with the blue jackets. The greatest good-humour prevailed. Both the old dames and young women belonging to our freeholders and the small occupiers of land mustered strong in their pink and purple ribbons. To one old dame I had given two beautiful bows, which she had placed one on each side of her cap, which so enchanted her that, on seeing me, she ran and laid hold of my hands, and gave me a kiss on either cheek, one

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for each bow, declaring that "I was the most charming gentleman she ever did know." Thus ended, with "a kiss, without a blow," this memorable and eventful contest, and thankful indeed was I, for it had been an anxious time for me. We had returned our two members, which showed us that there existed a strong feeling of loyalty to the Crown in the western division of Norfolk, and a resolution to maintain the ancient institutions of the country in Church and State. I grieve, however, to say that the contest also created a division between many formerly friendly members of the Whig and Conservative parties, which I do not think has ever quite died out.

There were several old Whig families who had always been friends of mine. There existed a slight coolness in consequence of political differences between the Astley family and ourselves, but it wore away with time, and when I was placed in an unpleasant difficulty by no fault of my own, Sir Jacob Astley, with others, came forward most kindly to defend me. In the ancient family of Letton Hall, much respected in the county, we had always possessed most

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kind friends. A slight feeling of coolness might have remained in their minds also, but that, in time, died away, and they were as amiable and pleasant as ever. We staid there occasionally and enjoyed some good sport with the sons, with whom we used to shoot, spending very pleasant days.

Mr. Gurdon told me an amusing story of an old gentleman, Sir Roger W——, a friend of his, who came every year from London in the shooting season, and who used sometimes to try to leave the rest of the party, steal away, go towards the Hall, and, if in October, get there by the covert's side, now and then taking a shot at a cock-pheasant. On one occasion his party had been out partridge shooting, and Sir Roger "stole away" home, as it was believed. On the return of the whole party, the dressing-bell rang, but Sir Roger had not come in. The second bell rang, dinner was announced, when the butler informed his master that Sir Roger had not yet appeared. The young men opened the hall door, and while they were listening for the Baronet's return, the sound of "Bang! bang!" was heard from a covert a quarter of a

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mile from the house. Some of the young men exclaimed, "He has got into the home covert," and ran for their boots to go out in search of the old Baronet; but before they could reach him, they heard two more shots fired, and then a voice shouting, as if in pain or embarrassment.

In those days man-traps and spring-guns were set in the woods for the especial benefit of poachers. The old Baronet's cries brought those who were in search of him to the missing man, fast set in a trap, fortunately for him a humane one—*i.e.*, without teeth, but, nevertheless, closing round the leg, and preventing one pulling it out till the spring was unlocked, a duty which was performed by the keeper, who was brought by the young men. The release of this unintentional poacher from his unpleasant predicament, ought to have served as a lesson to him for the future, as no doubt it did.

Speaking of poachers, while staying at Lord Berners', after the Sale of Game Bill was passed, the conversation at dinner turning upon the likely effects of this measure, some amusing anecdotes were told. Everyone travelling in

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Norfolk knows what an extensive rabbit warren there is between Brandon and Barton Mills. In the former dwelt a number of first-rate poachers, and Mr. Augustine's property approached close to the warren, and had a quantity of game, well preserved. After dinner, the old Lord Berners pulled out a printed paper from his pocket, and begged to hand it around, for the benefit of his guests.

"There, ladies and gentlemen, you can see by this already the effects of the bill."

It was headed, "Pheasants. My lord sells at seven shillings a brace, we sell at six." "*We*" meaning poachers.

Lord Berners said, laughing,

"I suppose I shall have to come down in my price. I must sell at six, too; and then they will come down to five shillings."

One year in the Spring, at Raynham, my cousin, George Hudson, and I went out to shoot some of the too numerous hares. The keeper and Hudson were inside the belt, and I proposed going outside to the end of it, to get a shot at those driven out by them into the open. The wood, I should mention, was enclosed by a

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ditch. Arriving at the end of this long covert, I saw a man sitting in the ditch. Presently I observed him put something into the pocket of his thick duffel coat, and immediately afterwards I saw another man do the same. Then I guessed that these two men belonged to the plough and horses standing in the field. Hearing our guns, they had snared the hares as they ran. I walked up to them, and said,

"You have thick duffel coats on."

"Yes, sir."

"What have you in your pockets?"

"We have our dinners, sir."

"And something besides," I added, as, to their astonishment, I put my hand into each of their pockets and pulled out two hares. Then, hallooing to the keeper, he came up, and secured both the men, whose names we got, and in whose pockets we discovered snares. These men, who were working on Norton's farm, as it is now, were sent before the magistrates.

I tell this story as a hint to game preservers. Certainly the selling of game does not prevent, in some cases, the pleasure of sending and re-

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ceiving it from friends, as I have experienced only lately from Raynham and elsewhere.

In the Spring of 1838, Lord Sondes ordered the corps of yeomanry cavalry under his command to muster near Brisley. We marched to Sennowe Lodge, Mr. Wodehouse's property, where we went through a day's exercise. I was not aware of the object in thus assembling the troops, till his lordship, forming us into close column, informed us that, in consequence of the Government having, as he thought, unwisely reduced the Kentish yeomanry cavalry to half their strength, he was resolved no longer to serve in the yeomanry cavalry of Norfolk. He had taken a deep interest in the well-being and efficiency of the Kent corps, under the command of his gallant friend, Lord Winchilsea, he himself being a captain of the corps, and having a large landed interest in that county; and feeling quite uncertain if the Government would not also reduce the Norfolk corps in the same unceremonious way, he had resolved to resign his command of them. This, of course, surprised everyone. After a short speech of commendation, thanking the

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officers and men for their attention to his wishes and commands, and their politeness to himself, he dismissed us. Some months before, Captain Brereton, who commanded the Holt troop, had also resigned his post.

What was to be the consequence of Lord Sondes' resignation, I had myself no idea. A few days after, I received from the Lord-Lieutenant a letter, requesting me to go to Kimberley. Of course, I obeyed this summons. After expressing his regret at what Lord Sondes had done, Lord Wodehouse said he wished me to take the command, and that he should name me as the Major-Commandant to Her Majesty. This he did, and I was now in command of the corps into which I had entered as lieutenant on its first formation in 1832. I recommended my lieutenant, H. B. Caldwell, Esq., to be captain of the Raynham troop. Mr. John Mott had been sent for by Lord Wodehouse to join the Holt troop, which post he accepted, and kept it in excellent order. Captain Ives took command of the Dereham and Hingham troop. The list of subalterns was soon filled up, and Wood became one of my lieutenants.

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I saw many changes from time to time, such as occur in all regiments, but Wood "nailed his colours to the mast." In weal or woe he stood by me to the last, as, indeed, did nearly every non-commissioned officer and private member of the corps.

This Spring I endured another dreadful attack of inflammation in my poor eye, and had to be bled and blistered constantly for three months. At one period, indeed, I gave up all hope of saving it, and thought that the inflammation must end in total blindness; but again I recovered, again my sight was mercifully spared, and in October I was enabled to call out the corps for permanent duty at Dereham, with new officers, and a great many new members, with whom I had to begin again; but I got through the difficulty much better than I expected. There was an excellent feeling pervading all the troops of every rank, of itself making the duty a pleasure. The officers gave a ball at the Assembly Rooms, which was well attended. Lord Wodehouse, Mrs. Gurdon of Letton, Lord and Lady Sondes, Lord Walsingham, my relatives, Lord and Lady Baning, and

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many others, ladies and gentlemen of both divisions of the county, the wives and daughters of the members of the corps, to whom we sent cards of invitation, were present. It was said that we assembled more than three hundred people that night. We had formed our own band of musicians from Norwich, Lynn, Fakenham, Dereham, and from other places, in all twenty men. Jonas Wright I appointed my bandmaster, and a good musician he was. He taught all the young ladies around the pianoforte. He said before he died, when very ill, I was told, that he owed all his success to me.

I could dance little myself, for I suffered much at times in my left foot, which, I have forgotten to mention, I maimed while canvassing in the first election for Mr. Bagge. At the request of our committee, I had gone to Narford Hall to see Mr. Fountaine, an old friend of my father's and my family, a gentleman of the true old-fashioned school of highly polished manners and society; always most friendly with and attentive to me, as, indeed, were all members of his house, especially his two amiable daughters, whom I often met visiting

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my sisters at Raynham. It was explained to me that a letter had been written to him by the secretary for the Conservative cause, to which no answer had been returned. I was requested to go and see him, and consented; but first I begged to be allowed to see a copy of that letter, on reading which I perceived at once the cause of Mr. Fountaine's silence. Some people never know the difference between one person and another, and are ignorant of the politeness due in addressing a gentleman well used to be treated with all courtesy and consideration by gentlemen. Such was not the tenor of this letter, and I told Mr. Mills that I was not surprised that Mr. Fountaine did not reply to a letter written in that cool style, making a demand, as a matter of course, instead of a polite request from one of a committee of gentlemen. I said I would do my best to set the thing right. I rode to Dunham and on to Narford upon "Punch" (on whose back I had been all the morning), and by that time I had done thirty miles, and fortunately found Mr. Fountaine at home, lunched with him, and then entered upon my mission. No one could be more amiable

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and candid than he was. He had sent no reply to an attorney's letter, because he conceived himself entitled to a more polite and courteous communication. "But now that you have come to me, I can promise you that you shall have every support from me and my people that I can possibly bring you;" and he fully kept his word.

I started off for the Rudhams and other places, and on to Raynham, where, by seven o'clock, the roads were dark, and a frost had set in. I sat down to dinner, having first seen Punch cared for, and then I left him there for the night. Lord Charles lent me a beautiful young fleet horse of Sir Jacob's Arab breed, which I had ridden a few times, and tried to teach to jump well. At eight o'clock I left for Elmham, where I had promised to meet Lord Sondes at the audit supper to his tenants, in his hall, where I should also meet many voters. I was to sing some songs for him, and help to amuse them with their favourite song, "John's Ale." Thinking to save two miles, I made a short cut for "Horningtoft Hurdle," a little public-house close by the wood of that name, where we often found

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a fox. Through it was a wide, open ride, which brought me opposite to the road direct to Elmham, to reach which it was necessary to jump a fence. I rode across a ploughed field between the wood and the fence, on the other side of which stood two cottages. I took a place where I had often jumped old Punch when the hounds broke away after the fox. It had begun to freeze ere I left the Hall, and riding the young horse at the fence, he alighted on the top of the bank, as I wished; but the frost, having rendered it hard and slippery, he sprang off, intending to clear the ditch on the other side, but his feet slipped from under him, and he fell with me into the road, close to the cottages, upon my left side and foot, jamming it under his side against the hard ground. Fortunately for me the fall did not break my leg or head, though my hat was crushed. The horse was very active, and directly he struggled to move, I pulled my leg from under him. He was not hurt at all. Two women, hearing the noise, came out, and I found the blood streaming down my face from a cut over the left eye, the sight of which I had lost. The women

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feared that I was half killed. In their cottage I got cold water and bathed my eyebrow, bound it up with a rag and a pocket-handkerchief, and rode to a doctor's shop in Elmham, where I had it properly plastered up, and in that pretty condition entered Elmham Hall. To my foot I paid, unluckily, no attention; though it pained me in the stirrup, I thought it was only the immediate effect of the bruise, little thinking that I had broken the bone of the smallest toe. I sang, and did what I could to amuse my friends till twelve o'clock, thinking all the time more of the cut and patched-up brow than I did of my foot; and I remember that, when I had to answer Mr. Coke from our Fakenham platform at the barber's window, a man in the crowd below, on the other side, called out, "Captain, who gave you that black eye?"

"I got it in the good cause, and not from you," was my reply.

I put my feet into a warm bath, and slept soundly till eight o'clock. I had my foot examined next day, and bandaged, without discovering the real mischief, and when it was known, it was not rightly set, and has been,

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ever since, both painful and troublesome, forcing me to wear one boot larger than the other, and yet I find that few people can beat me in walking even now. I was very thankful that the horse, charming to ride as to speed, but skittish and jumping about, was not hurt. I feared his knees might be broken, and I had escaped breaking my neck. I had ridden sixty miles in that day's work.

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CHAPTER IX.

Divine Providence—Drinking Habits—Early Marriages—Strikes and their Leaders—Conservative Triumph celebrated by a Public Dinner—Prince Albert's Own Corps of Norfolk Yeomanry—A Troop Horse from the Greys—Corporal Donald Corry—Disbandment of my Corps—Inspected by Colonel Molyneux—Regatta at Havre—Unfounded Statements—Court of Inquiry—The Irish Gentleman's Mistake.

AS I proceed in my narrative, I do not find it so easy to recall the events of later life as those of my boyhood. Early impressions take a strong hold on the mind, which appears to me a forcible reason, and one for which we have the warrant of Scripture, why the young of all classes of the community, in a country called Christian, should be obliged to hear read, and be taught to read, the Word of God, and not be left free to take their own choice in that the most vital part of education. And if the few remarks which I have made are of ser-

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vice to those commencing life, I shall not think my words quite thrown away. I have thought over most seriously, now in my eightieth year, the many trying scenes I have witnessed, the many painful things that have occurred to me individually, and the more I reflect upon them, the more deeply am I convinced that nothing takes place, either in regard to individuals, or to nations either, as regards their misfortunes or prosperity, in which the hand of the Almighty God, the Creator of the universe, may not be seen. I have served as a sailor, I have served as a soldier, and, during both periods of my life, I have witnessed some noble traits of character in right-thinking and religious men, and, on the contrary, manifestations of vice and acts of profligacy in the worldly and irreligious. I can safely say that the Scriptures declare truly that they who take the bright and Morning Star for their guide, prosper far beyond those who neglect that Leader to all that is noble.

"Of all the vices,' Lord Chesterfield says, in his letters to his son, "that of drinking is the worst." It poisons the health, destroys the constitution, corrupts the blood, hardens the heart, and

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brings on disease in early life, and probably an early death. I would take the liberty of an older man, to advise my juniors in years to avoid that which in old times, I am ashamed to say, was thought a very fine thing—to be able at one sitting to carry away two or three bottles of port. Now I am thankful to know that drinking overmuch is deemed, and justly deemed, a low vice. What can be lower than a man who swamps his reason in beer, &c.? what more disgusting, unless a woman so vitiated—ruined? In this age we are doing our best to lessen this vile habit of intoxication, which has increased to such an extent among the lower classes (with whom no example in that respect seems to take effect), as to call forth all the energies of the clergy and the laity to make any head against it. The accounts daily of the Police Courts prove how much crime is occasioned by the use of strong drink. Look at the reports of the brutality of men towards their wives, and, worse still, of their cruelty to, and neglect of, helpless children, under this baneful influence!

I am a great advocate for early marriages in the higher ranks of society. God created the

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man and the woman to be a comfort, help, and solace to each other. When man was formed from the dust of the earth, by the Almighty Power, the spirit of life was breathed into his nostrils, and he arose a living being, and beautiful, for in the divine likeness was he created. But God said it was not good for man to be alone, so, from his very self, he created a helpmate for him, "bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh." With what intense pleasure I have read the beautiful passage in Milton's "Paradise Lost," describing the perfect form of Eve, as she gazed at herself reflected in the clear water, and "wondered much who and what she was," and now, to think of such an originally beautiful creation ever being desecrated, degraded by intemperance, or subjected to ill-usage by him who was made to be her protector! It is a sin and a blot upon the escutcheon of England, and nations far and wide point the finger of scorn at us for the brutal conduct of our labouring classes to their wives.

Is it not also disgraceful that men should combine as they do combine, and secretly ill-use each other by violence and intimidation, to force others

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to join with them in what are styled "strikes!" These very men, guilty of such acts, too well known, would rebel against an autocratic Government; are they not to each other, and do they not serve under leaders, the cruellest autocrats? How many hundred men have been forced, in fear of their lives, to join these societies?

My readers will ask, how come all these things to pass?—secret things are not natural to the English people? I reply, from the want of proper religious instruction in their childhood. Even in the rural districts, where the clergy do their utmost in every way, they are equally thwarted by the parents. Not very long since, I was walking with a clergyman, in Lincolnshire, who was staying in the same house with myself, far from any town, when we heard a little child screaming loudly. At a cottage not far from the road, we found the mother beating her most unmercifully, calling her every opprobrious name besides little "varmint," "little viper." And why? She, a child of three years, had stumbled and spilt some milk! We separated the child from her; and upon our remonstrating with her upon her

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passionate severity to such an infant, she said, "That is no business of yours." My friend replied that "indeed it was our business, and that he was a clergyman."

"Oh! you're one of them sort," said she.

"Have you ever read your Bible?"

"I have; but what has that to do with it?"

"Very much. Does that book tell you to use that language to your child?"

"No!"

"Have you any more children?"

"Two boys at work over there."

"Do they ever read, or do you read to them?"

"No; I have something else to do."

This proves how little instruction is given by parents, willingly, to their children. It is evident, therefore, that voluntary teaching of Holy Scripture would come to nothing, in most cases; and how many have never heard of the Bible even. It is a fact, though it is hardly credible, but it is shown in the records of courts of justice, and in places where it would seem impossible, that lads of sixteen and men of twenty years, even, have never heard of that sacred book.

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After the great contest in 1837, in which Norfolk returned four Conservative members for the county, two for Norwich, two for Lynn, two for Yarmouth, and one for Thetford—eleven members—it was proposed to celebrate this great victory by a dinner at Norwich, in its venerable ancient St. Andrew's Hall. I received a note from the committee of management, with an invitation to this intended banquet, requesting me to take the chair. I doubted for some days what to do. I had accidentally heard that a gentleman of consideration in the county expected to be asked to fill this post. I consulted with my uncle and Mr. Tacey at last, and asked them what they would advise me to do. They both agreed in opinion that, if I declined, the gentleman to whom I alluded would not be asked to fill the office, as, although he was much esteemed and valued by all who knew him, he was not considered competent to undertake such a duty; and, by the confidence placed in me, shown by the request, I was bound to accept the compliment. Thus urged, I accepted, and the dinner came off. I walked down with the Marquis of Douro and

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Sir Samuel Bignold to the Hall, which was splendidly lighted, decorated, quite filled with the members for the county, Lynn, and Yarmouth, &c., and the galleries crowded with ladies. Around me were the Marquis of Douro, the Earl of Orford, Lord James Townshend, Lord Wodehouse, Lord Walsingham, Colonel Standen, Sir Edward Stracey, and Sir Thomas Gouch. The dinner passed off. I rose to propose the first toast. I must confess that I felt nervous upon the occasion, when I commenced speaking, and I remember clearly the very words I used:—"My lords, ladies, and gentlemen—I have been in some trying scenes of life, but in none more so than the present, which requires all my zeal and energy to do that which I could desire in it; and, however doubtful I may have been of my own powers to accomplish—yet, when I look around upon this vast assemblage in this ancient hall, comprised of men of rank, talent, position, wealth, mingled with all classes of the highest respectability, it dispels from my mind much of that timidity with which I came here, kindles anew that bright spark of enthusiasm which should

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ever burn in the breast of a loyal man, and bids me fear nothing, but go on and do my duty. What, then, is the first and foremost duty I have this evening to perform? It is to call upon you, my fellow-countrymen, one and all, to pledge me in a bumper toast to her who wears the crown of these realms. Ay, and full well do I know, by the reception you will give to Her Gracious Majesty's health, that you will show our opponents that we can, and will, drink to the health of our Queen with the same fervent loyalty which has ever been the characteristic of the pledges of the Conservatives to her ancestors who have reigned before her. Fill up, then, your glasses, gentlemen, fill them to the brim! Now then!" I sang—

'Upstanding, uncovered, around let it pass,
Here's a health to our Queen, God bless her!'"

The old Hall rang again and again with the cheers "for the Queen," and when I sat down, repeated clapping of hands showed me that it was a heartfelt ovation. Thus armed, I felt no more doubts for the rest of the evening, supported, as I was, by the addresses of Lord Wodehouse, the Earl of Orford, the Marquis of Douro, and

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the members for the county. The meeting broke up in the greatest possible amity and good humour, and I, quite contented and happy, went for that night to Mr. John Stracey's; Lord James and my wife's brothers, General and Colonel Dixon, and others, were at Sir Edward Stracey's close by.

After the performance of our duty with the yeomanry in 1841, Her Gracious Majesty was pleased to allow this corps, under my command, to be styled "Prince Albert's Own Corps of Yeomanry Cavalry," which was announced to me in a letter from Lord Wodehouse, the Lord-Lieutenant, which gratified me and all concerned greatly.

In 1842, another general election took place, when Messrs. Bagge and Chute were returned without opposition. Meanwhile, I did my utmost to get the corps under my command into good order, in which I was supported by the willingness of the members, aided by the assistance of the officers and non-commissioned officers. I received valuable aid from Mr. St. Quintin, of Norwich, who rendered me good service in teaching the men the sword exercise. I had changed

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the pistol for the carbine, perceiving the former weapon to be useless if called upon to act on foot, or even on mounted service. To promote excellence in the use of this weapon, I gave a prize of a handsome sword at the conclusion of our yearly duty; likewise, for the best shot, either a subscription purse or a fowling-piece. This stimulated all to exert themselves to excel in the use of the sword and the carbine. I used to meet the men in companies, twenty or thirty at a time, living so far apart, when it suited their convenience. Sergeant St. Quintin won the first prize sword (which was my gift in the first instance, and was followed up by one of the officers in succeeding years) at Yarmouth. Sergeant Freeman won the first carbine prize, a purse of ten sovereigns, at Swaffham. The two following years I presented a handsome carbine, of a new construction by Westley and Richards—which it was thought would have been introduced into the Cavalry—won by a member of the Holt troop, commanded by Captain Mott. This carbine had a spring, which contained forty copper caps. After firing, you pulled back this spring, and it

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deposited a fresh cap on the nipple, saving time in searching for one from the pouch. I must not omit Mr. George Riches, of Sherford, one of the sergeants of the Raynham troop, who was a most excellent and attentive person, and had served with me in the Norfolk Rangers, from which I never knew him absent on any one occasion when either they or the yeomanry were called out. He rode well, and possessed several good horses, particularly a steady grey mare. And this reminds me that one of my Raynham young men told me that he had been to Norwich, and had purchased a horse belonging to the Greys quartered there; "that now he had a horse he was sure would know his duty." He was certainly a fine-looking animal, and his owner was much pleased with his bargain. He had given eleven pounds for him on the Castle Hill, where the cast horses were generally sold ere the regiment quitted. I hoped he would find him satisfactory; but some of these for sale are queer ones.

"Lor, sir, he is as quiet as a lamb, and goes well in harness, too."

"The troop meets next week. Bring him out."

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It was a Spring meeting on Hempton Green, where they assembled before going on permanent duty. Captain Buckworth commanded that day. I watched the proceedings as they marched and trotted past in divisions. The rider of the grey had been told off as one of the skirmishers, blank cartridge being served out to all. On their wheeling into line, the word was given, "Skirmishers to the front!" when the others dashed out, but the grey moved not. I saw his owner spurring him to get him to the front, but not one inch would he stir. The Captain called to him—

"To the front!"

"Dash it, Captain, I cannot get him to move, sir!" said the owner of the grey, in tones of despair and vexation, nor would he stir from the side of his companion by any persuasion. "Poor fellow," thought I, "you are done!" Some laughed at his expense—no one pitied him. The horse was useful in the farm and in harness, but the handsome *ci-devant* grey of the Greys never appeared more in that military field.

On the retirement of Serjeant St. Quintin who went abroad, I appointed Corporal Donald

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Corry in his place. He had served in India, in a Dragoon regiment, for some years—was a most intelligent non-commissioned officer to me, besides being much respected by all the corps. He was a fine, handsome man, with a soldierly bearing, and he served with me until the year 1849, when the circular came from the Government to officers commanding regiments of yeomanry cavalry, asking them if the country was in that quiet state that they could be dispensed with. The answer was that our county was peaceful, and had been so for some time. In the year previous to this circular, the Earl of "Leicester of Holkham," who was appointed Lord-Lieutenant on the death of my old friend, Lord Wodehouse, had invited all the corps, while we were on permanent duty at Wells, close to Holkham, to dine with him after the inspection in his park. He gave us a magnificent banquet in a marquee—Lord Hastings of Melton Constable; Captain Marryat, the famous naval novelist; Mr. Norris; several of the clergy of the neighbourhood; the Honourable Mr. Keppel; some of the Holkham tenants; all the officers and non-commissioned

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officers and privates of my corps, were present. Colonel Smith of the Blues, the inspecting-officer, came from London. He had been the officer appointed the year before, also while we were at Cromer. Nothing could exceed the urbanity and kindness of Lord Leicester, who, in rising to propose my health, spoke of the corps in the highest terms, saying that so long as I commanded it he would do his utmost to support me. Judge of my surprise when I received a copy of the circular from his lordship, informing me that he had stated to the Government that he could dispense with the services of the corps.

I had gone to join my family at Pisa, in Tuscany, where I received this letter. It is a curious circumstance that Lord Sondes had said to me not long before, "You have done a deal for the corps, Loftus, and have got it into beautiful order—I hear it from everybody—but you may rely upon it that the Whigs will 'let you down,' as they did Lord Winchilsea, when they want to make up their budget, showing a saving in the Army estimates." They did let down not only me, but several others. I found

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myself placed in the most awkward predicament. After the speech at Holkham, I said to my adjutant and to Captain Buckworth, "I suppose that we are safe now, and I may order the new clothing?" Everyone had said to me when Lord Wodehouse died, "You will not keep the corps long—you will be disbanded," therefore there had been a doubt in my mind as to ordering new clothing and accoutrements, and involving myself in further expense, being already one thousand pounds out of pocket by the corps. Five hundred pounds had been lost by the failure of a private bank near Holt, which money had been placed there by Major Mills, but it never came back to the corps during my command, and under the conviction that I *should* receive it, I had fitted out the men from my own pocket. Lord Wodehouse had told me that if I retained the command for a few years, I should be able to repay myself out of the annual allowances of £3 each man. So, naturally thinking there was now no fear of a reduction, I ordered such clothing as was

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required of the Army clothiers in London, saddlery, &c., and this had all been done ere I left Norfolk for Italy. I confess I was very angry at receiving this intimation from his lordship, and from Wood and other officers of the corps, who were all astounded at what had occurred.

I came to England, and saw Mr. Wyndham of Felbrig, whom I had always opposed in politics, but who came forward like an English gentleman, and pointed out to Lord Leicester how very ill, he conceived, I had been used by the Government in placing me in this position, after all the expense I had been at in the maintenance of the corps; and I will now do Lord Leicester the justice to say that, upon the case being thus shown to him, he did his best to rectify the error, and backed up my application to Sir Sidney Herbert, then Secretary at War, for the amount which was due to me for the allowances of that year. Sir Sidney behaved most handsomely on the subject; and when he became acquainted with the facts, sent me an order for four hundred and eighty pounds.

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I have sadly digressed. I was likewise ably assisted in the corps by Mr. Parnell Maillard, who had joined me as lieutenant, recommended by Captain Ives, and by Theophilus Buckworth, Esq., of Clay Hall, near Swaffham, a sincere friend of mine, who proved a good and valuable officer. On Captain Caldwell's retiring, he took the command of the Raynham troop, and never lost an opportunity of instructing his men; nor did he forget old days or an old friend, and the last kindness which he did me was to carry a basket of game, directed to me from Swaffham, when he went to attend a magistrate's meeting in that place, where he died suddenly the same afternoon.

I had brought the corps to such a state of efficiency that, when Colonel the Honourable William Molyneux, of the 8th Hussars, inspected them at Cromer, he requested me, at the conclusion of our field day, to permit him to address a few words to the officers and men. I remember perfectly well the words he used. Turning to me in the most polite manner, as I reined in my horse near him, he said,

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"Major Loftus, and gentlemen of Prince Albert's Own Norfolk Yeomanry Cavalry, I beg to say a few words to you to express my admiration of the efficient state of discipline in which I find you." Turning to me, "Sir, your officers are well instructed; and, gentlemen, you ought to be proud of your commanding officer; you are an honour to your county, and I shall have the greatest satisfaction in making the highest report of you."

I thanked him very much for the kind address he had made, which I well knew was fully deserved by the corps under my command. Colonel Molyneux, a very handsome man, wearing the brilliant uniform of the 8th Hussars, and mounted on a magnificent charger, covered with a leopard skin, rode into Cromer with me, the band playing several lively airs, among them, "In the days when we went gipsying," which amused him much. We drew up in front of Tucker's Hotel, where we saluted the gallant colonel, gave him three hearty cheers—(oh! these were the merry days when we were young, a long time ago)—and invited

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him to dinner, to which of course he came. When at last we parted, we were sorry to lose so pleasant a companion. The Hussars remained in Norwich till the following Spring, the time at which the Dragoons there changed quarters. They gave a splendid ball to all the nobility and gentry of the neighbourhood before they took their departure.

In the year 1844, having made up my mind to take my family abroad, I let my house and land for a year to a friend, and went to Havre de Grâce, where we remained a short time. While I was there, the Prince de Joinville arrived to superintend the regatta, which was to take place at that time. At that period there existed much unpleasant feeling between the English and the French Governments, and people feared that it would lead to worse consequences. The Paris press was most violent in denunciations against the English, especially against the *Times*, which the old ladies called "ce detestable *Times*." On the opening of the regatta, steam-vessels came from England, one of which brought a boat from Plymouth, with

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six women, who came to contest for the principal prize, professedly open to all nations. When the French heard of the steamer, with the boat and her crew, they were in a state of the greatest excitement. I went down to see what was going on. It was amusing to hear the hearty abuse of the English in which the French boatmen indulged. One race had already been won by four English against four French gentlemen; but when the race for the prize for all nations came on, and the six women took their seats in their boat in their short petticoats made of stout brown stuff, blue sailors' jackets, straw hats, and blue ribbons, the excitement was beyond description. After some difficulty the boats were placed in order, and a start was made towards a vessel, moored outside in the Roads, for them to pull round, and come in to the winning-post. It was very clear the French tried to shuffle the English boat, so that she should not possibly win, but, after rounding the vessel, she got clear off those who wished to impede her, and won the race.

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It is impossible to describe the dismay and astonishment of the "Johnny Crapeaux," who "sacré'd!" pulled their moustaches, jumped about, gesticulated and grimaced in the most wonderful way, the English ladies and gentlemen, who were many in number, standing silently by, and looking on with a smile. The contrast between the manner and conduct of the two races was so great that I think it rendered the French still more furious.

We remained a fortnight at Frascati's Hotel, which was very comfortable and reasonable in those days. The hotel was close to the entrance of the port, and our rooms looked on the sea. Havre apparently carried on a brisk trade with America, judging by the quantity of magnificent vessels coming in and going out, reminding me of those which my ship had captured on the American coast during the war in 1812. I then took a small house at St. Adresse, a mile and a half out of Havre, a most charming spot, about five minutes' walk from the beach, where there were good bathing-machines. The thing which most astonished us was the costume of French

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bathers, as they valsed round and round, and danced about in the water. The costume of the gentlemen was very sparing indeed, as they wore drawers only from the waist to the knees; but the ladies were more *comme il faut*, although their dresses fitted very closely when they were wet. To me it was a most disgusting exhibition.

After seeing my wife and daughter comfortably established in their small house, I started off one evening in the packet for Southampton, thence to London, and down to Kimberley Hall, which the dear old lord had made me promise to make my home whenever I came to England. I had to arrange with him where to take the yeomanry cavalry on duty that year. Having decided to go to Holt, I went home to Billingford, to stay with my tenants, Mr. and Mrs. Millett, a few days, having some things to arrange. After sending out circulars to the officers commanding troops, I went to Mr. Wood at Morston, and thence to Melton Constable, to stay with Sir Jacob Astley, now Baron Hastings, an old title belonging to his family,

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to which he was heir. Here I remained a short time, previous to going to Holt on duty in the latter part of May.

To me it was a most unpleasant meeting, for certain statements which had been made respecting me by some of my officers, but which were entirely devoid of truth, had reached me. I therefore deemed it my duty to request two of my officers to come over to Kimberley, and lay these statements before the Lord-Lieutenant, and to demand a court of inquiry, so as to give those who had spoken of me in a manner which I considered as most unfair and unjust, reflecting upon my honour as an officer and a gentleman, an opportunity of proving their charges, and myself that of showing how utterly without foundation they were. During the eight days' training and exercise, I never saw the men do their duty better than upon that occasion. Of course, there was a coolness upon my part towards those who had made statements which I knew were false, and which, coming especially from one of them, whom I had considered my warmest friend, made the

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whole matter more painful to me. This gentlemen had circulated a story, after I had left England for Havre, "that I had run away from the country, leaving unpaid the bills owing for the clothing and equipment of the corps." I took the earliest opportunity, at the termination of the first day's drill, of saying that, in consequence of information which I had received, I had felt it due to myself to demand a court of inquiry, and I had done so, adding, that I should make that officer who had maligned me prove before my face the charges he had circulated behind my back, when our military duties were at an end.

The inquiry was held at the Castle at Norwich in July. John Stracey, Esq., a magistrate of the county, who had been Judge Advocate in India, was appointed chairman of the court. The Honourable William Rouse, of the Coldstream Guards, brother of the Earl of Stradbroke, and Captain Frederick Keppel, of the Fusilier Guards, were the officers composing the court. I cannot say that Captain Keppel had ever been a friend of mine, but his father

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and mother were old friends of my family, and we had been together at a school, where we had fought a battle, which, they say, sometimes cements friendship between boys, but we were decided enemies in politics. Previous to the inquiry, the names of the officers composing the court were sent to me by the Lord-Lieutenant's secretary, with a desire to know if I had any objection to any one of them. My reply was simply "that I felt no objection to any of them, knowing them to be all men of honour." Some of my friends said, "If Keppel is one, you have little chance."

"Why so?" I asked.

"Because he hates you for your political opinions."

"That may be, but he is an honourable man and a gentleman, an officer in the Army, and by men of the Army I would rather be tried than by any civil jury not understanding military matters." And I found this officer, when I was before the court, the most clever and intelligent of all the three, searching thoroughly into the whole case with the utmost acuteness.

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My late commanding officer, Lord Sondes, who was examined, bore testimony to my exertions, in every way to my honour, for the good of the corps.

The result of the inquiry which I had demanded was that the five charges brought against me were all proved to be wholly without foundation; and the officer who had circulated the reports derogatory to my honour was compelled to leave the corps, his departure being followed by the resignation of those who had been misled by others.

There were four other frivolous charges, all of which were proved to be equally unfounded, particularly that which had relation to my leaving the country without paying the bills for the saddlers, tailors, &c. If I had intended leaving England altogether, I should not now have returned to take the corps out on duty after I had left my family at Havre. My being in command of this corps did not annul my right to be with my family when I wished, especially as I had leave from the Lord-Lieutenant, and for five consecutive years I had been in the habit of

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going to Italy, and returning every Spring to resume my command. If their object was to get rid of me, they signally failed in accomplishing it. Nor did I lose a single non-commissioned officer or private member of the corps. The adjutant, too, thought it best to resign, and my old adjutant, Captain Gurling, joined me, and remained with me till his death in March, 1849.

After these disagreeable proceedings, I went to the October ball at Norwich, and on entering the room with Lord Hastings, was warmly greeted by all my old friends. All my military comrades told me I had done the right thing, and were delighted with the manner in which I had followed it up, as well as with the result. After this unpleasant affair, which I have described more particularly than I had first intended doing, I stayed with some friends, first at Lord Orford's, where I enjoyed some good shooting, then at Raynham, where I also met many friends, from whom I received hearty congratulations on my extrication from a position which had given me so much pain ever

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since I returned from Havre, when I first received notice that such reports were circulated to my dishonour. My old friend Dashwood, formerly of the Grenadier Guards, who had taken holy orders and married one of the Miss Astleys, and held a living on the Melton Estate, told me that all whom he knew had expressed themselves warmly in my favour throughout those proceedings. The vacancies which had been made were filled up without difficulty by the present Lord Kimberley, then Mr. Wodehouse. Mr. Currie, Lieutenant Boyd of the Holt troop, and Mr. Marryat, son of the celebrated naval officer, were gazetted at the same time, with Captains Gurling and Buckworth. Mr. Wood was made lieutenant of the Holt troop, vice Brereton. I took my six months' leave of absence, leaving the corps under the command of Colonel Buckworth. Five years after, on Captain, subsequently Major Gurling's death, I sent in Serjeant Donald Corry's name as serjeant-major, and he was appointed to that post, for he was a most zealous and indefatigable soldier, and a man for

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whom I had and still have a great regard. He is still as active as ever on public duty.

I had likewise the pleasure of seeing and staying a few days in London with another gentleman of the old corps, Mr. John Scales, formerly a serjeant in the Raynham troop, who is well known in the agricultural world as a most talented man in the art of farming, having conducted, for many years, the model farm at Cirencester. He, like myself, has grown old, but it was a great pleasure to me to converse with such an intelligent and well-informed man, upon old times in Norfolk, where he held one of the principal farms under Lord C. Townshend. He found me out from having read the book containing an account of my early youth, and received me with the kindest hospitality.

Leaving, as I have mentioned, Colonel Buckworth in command, I sailed from the Thames in a steam-packet for Havre, accompanied by a large packet, bound for Dublin. After we had passed the Nore, the Dublin packet shot ahead. It was a fine morning, and I was indulging in the recollection of old plans, purposes, and hopes,

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recalling to my memory the first time I had been at the Nore in my ship, which had returned from the fatal Walcheren expedition, when a gentleman advanced, rubbing his hands, and taking off his hat, bowed most politely, saying,

"I suppose, sir, that you, like myself, are going to Dublin?"

"No, indeed, sir. I am going to Havre."

"But I am going to Dublin," said he.

It struck me that I must be on board the wrong vessel.

"Oh! sir," I said, "if that is the case, I must see the captain, and stop that vessel ahead."

The captain at that minute making his appearance, I asked where his vessel was bound, and he replied,

"You are on board the Havre de Grâce boat, sir, and I hope to be there at eight o'clock to-morrow morning."

The gentleman on hearing this grew wild with excitement, and dancing about the deck, exclaimed, "My wife! my wife!" in a frantic manner. I suggested to the captain that he

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should signal to the Dublin packet to heave to, which was immediately done, and the now happy Irish gentleman was relieved by being transferred to her.

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CHAPTER X.

Havre—French Boasting—Paris—Palais Royal—English and French Cookery—The Douane—Versailles—French Insolence Punished—A Prussian Policeman—The Chevalier Mechado's Mansion—Going to the Guillotine—Cavalry Inspection—St. Cloud—Strange Noises in our Lodgings—A Maison de Santé—St. Germain—Louis Philippe—Lyons—Grenoble Alevart—Excursion to the Mountains.

WE had a good passage, and the following morning found me at nine o'clock at St. Adresse, in the snug little abode I had hired when I left my family for England. We remained here a fortnight longer, and then, wishing to show my daughter more of the scenery of the country, we took the boat going up to Rouen. I had never been up the Seine before myself, so it was a double pleasure to me to visit all the spots with which our History of England renders us so familiar. At Rouen we found a comfortable hotel, and the next day was spent in visiting the beautiful cathedral, and other

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places of interest. The next day we continued our journey to Paris, on our way to which city three French gentlemen, one of them an elderly man, the others appearing to be his grandsons, got into the train with us. On passing through a part of the country well clothed with wood, the old gentleman said, turning to my wife—

"See, madame—that is the spot where *we* put the Prussians *hors-de-combat*, and prevented their entering Paris."

"And when was that?" said I.

"After the battle of Saint-Jean" (Waterloo).

"Bien, Monsieur, mais, cependant, how came it that they got there?"

Upon this he flew into a violent passion, tugging at his poor moustache, and swearing in French at the English, and everybody *not* French, all of whom were "diables." This was too much for the amused, risible faculties of my truly English dear little daughter, and she began to laugh, increasing his displeasure and vehemence, and making the matter worse by her expostulation—

"Mais, monsieur, mon père il est officier Anglais."

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"Ah, mais, bon Dieu! what part of the Army?"

"The Gardes de Pied."

"Eh! What regiment of the Garde?"

"The regiment which defended Hougomont, and drove back the French," I said quietly.

"Sacré!"

He jumped off his seat, and I thought he was going to strike me; but I quietly looked him full in the face, and he sat down and spoke no more. The two young men behaved very well, and tried to keep their irascible old companion quiet.

At Paris we made an arrangement to leave our luggage at the station, intending to proceed next day to Versailles, where a friend had engaged apartments for us, taking with us only what we required for the night.

The following morning we rose early, and made an excellent breakfast upon coffee, eggs, and French rolls. Coffee indeed! Paris is the place to make good *café au lait!* In fact, we know little about making good coffee in England. I have been in the best hotels in London, but I never could find any coffee equal to

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that made in Paris. After breakfast, we wandered through the streets to the Tuileries, expecting to see a magnificent building, but were disappointed. I could see nothing grand but its gilt railings, the tops of which were very pretty and ornamental for a palace. Napoleon's great Trophy Pillar, in the Place Vendôme, in memory of his victories, was very handsome; but of this the French were so proud that, when Napoleon III. became a prisoner of Prussia, that they pulled it to pieces. As we had resolved to be in Versailles before dark, we determined to dine at the Trois Frères in the Palais Royal, of which my child had read so much, and which is so well described in "Richelieu." We had not much time for exploring the building that day, but we saw enough to excite the wish to see more. What struck us English people first in those days was the free and easy way in which people lived in France. We went into the large salon, where fixing upon a table, we asked for a *carte de diner*, and ordered soup, which I did not think so good as in England; but the department of viands far excelled ours. We had côtelettes de veau, poulet roti, and potatos

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à la fricassée, which are inimitable, dry, fresh, and crisp. At Versailles a man would come with a hot tin, and sell us, at dinner time, a dish of these for two sous. Some sweets and a bottle of vin ordinaire completed our repast, for which we paid the large sum of two francs each, amounting to five shillings English money for three people. In England a waiter places before you a cover in great style, containing mutton chops, and charges half-a-crown each person, and for a bottle of sherry five shillings; and in the days before gas was universal, you were charged a pretty round sum for wax candles.

At three o'clock, in order to resume our journey by the chemin de fer, we got all our luggage together, eleven boxes, besides the small things of the ladies, and started off in the train to the well-known city of Versailles—so well known that it needs no description. Here we had to undergo the ordeal of the Douane, and have all our luggage unpacked and examined. The first question asked us by the officials was, "Have you anything to declare?" Our maid-servant, a Norfolk girl, and one of the best servants I ever had, was astonished at this.

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"Monsieur," said the chief officer, staring at us, "do all these belong to you? Have you any jambons" (hams) "to declare?" a question put on account of the law of the octroi duty, which enforced a payment on every description of food coming into the city. This so amused my daughter that, when she came into Versailles at any time afterwards, carrying a little basket, and was stopped at the barrier with the usual question, she answered, "Ah! oui, a little jambon ici," and they laughed. We had a long examination before us, and on our entrance two of the boxes were opened. I said, "I assure you that none of them are full of jambons!" which seemed to amuse the officers. At the same time I slipped a five franc piece into the chief's hand, and he marked all the boxes as passed, and they being carried off on trucks, in ten minutes everything was safely stowed in our lodgings close by, the large and commodious house of an English artisan settled at Versailles, who had something to do with the management of the railway to Paris. The house contained a very long drawing-room, with three windows on one side, looking into

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the country, and three more opposite, looking into the city. The door led into a long passage, on the left of which was a comfortable, large room, our bed-room, and my daughter's room, with that of her governess, who had joined us from England. The beds in France are all good—the linen as white as snow. Above was a room I kept as my dressing-room, and a chamber for our servant. In a week's time we had made ourselves quite comfortable.

The Winter came on very early, in the latter part of November, with a heavy fall of snow, and a severe frost. In the early part of the month, my daughter and I walked out to the forest, and bought two cart-loads of wood, which, being brought home, was lodged in the garden, in a shed near the kitchen, where, having bought a hatchet, saw, mallet, and some iron wedges, all English tools (through my landlord, who had been employed in Welsh iron-works), I used to cut up wood for two hours every morning, after breakfast, for the supply of the house, an exercise which kept me warm, and well and strong.

We used to walk in the beautiful gardens of

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Versailles, and witness the skating and sliding on the various pieces of water. The beautiful bassins and jets *d'eau* were all frozen, and from their ornaments as well as from the statues, lions, &c., hung icicles in all kinds of fantastic shapes, looking very ethereal. I thought the French skating a miserable exhibition, and observed some heavy falls. One day, while looking on, a young fellow came by me several times, apparently with intent to run against me. As he passed, looking me full in the face, he exclaimed, "Bah, Monsieur, cochon Anglais!" This made me savage, and as the second time he came still nearer to me, then wheeled round, and rushed directly at me, seeing that he intended a third charge, I put out my foot and down he went on his back. As he rose up, I ran up to him and hit him right and left in the face, giving him two black eyes. "Johnny Crapaud," said I, "prenez ceci!" upon which he went down again on his back. No one saw this affair but a policeman, and he was, fortunately, a Prussian. He had seen and heard it all; but he advised me never to do the same again, as I might get into a serious scrape. "I

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hate these fellows as much as you do. He richly deserved it. I shall know nothing." I subsequently had a talk with him, an intelligent man, who had, when very young, come to Paris with the Prussians, had married a Frenchwoman, and, in fact, had become a naturalised Frenchman. I took his advice, and I endured many insults from these blackguards, who hated us so cordially, but were not fond of facing us.

The great picture-gallery was an object of immense interest. Over the door, inscribed in letters of gold, were words to the effect that it was all "La gloire de la France!" The only picture of a victory over the English I saw was that of the battle lost by the Duke of Cumberland at Fontenoy (by Horace Vernet, I think), by the desertion of 8,000 Irish to the French lines. By the same painter was a fine picture of an attack of the French troops on the Arab Camp, by the Duke d'Aumale, a splendid figure of the Jew escaping with his money-bags, and others. We went into Paris at different times to see the many subjects of interest there—the Sèvres china, the Gobelin tapestry, the Tuileries. In

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all of them we were escorted by my old friend, the Chevalier Mechado, whom I found living near us at Versailles, in a beautiful mansion, with gardens and paddocks, all of which he kept up in the English style. All his servants, grooms, footmen, butler, were English, but not his cook, an exception in which, I think, he acted wisely, as he had learnt by experience how much more the foreigner knows of real cooking than we do. How much good food is entirely spoilt and wasted in England by ignorance of this useful art!

The weather continued very severe throughout January and February. We kept Christmas Day in the old English style; our Norfolk servant made some excellent mince-pies, but she did not boil the plum-pudding enough, which greatly vexed her; the second boiling, however, made it capital the next day. A plum-pudding should be in the pot at gun-fire! In January, during a deep snow, immediately after breakfast one morning, I observed a procession moving slowly along the street—a cart drawn by one horse, in which were two miserable objects, their hands tied behind them, and a gendarme carrying a carbine. On each side of the fatal cart was a

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file of infantry, with mounted gendarmes in front and rear. On inquiring of my landlord what all this meant, I learnt that two murderers were going to the guillotine. I hesitated for some time whether or not I ought to go and witness this spectacle, which I had never seen, but having read so much of these executions, and thinking of Marie Antoinette's sorrows and death, I slowly followed the cart, and stood still at a distance when it reached the appointed place of execution, where was an erection of woodwork, and a platform, upon which the unfortunate beings were doomed to die. The instrument of death, in the shape of a hatchet without a handle, was swayed up between two pillars of wood, and heavily weighted. On touching a spring, the hatchet, well oiled, runs down a groove in the pillars, and coming in contact with the neck of the culprit, the head is off instantly, and falls into a bag. The doomed man is first seized by the executioners, quickly strapped to a board, and thrown with his face downwards, his head and neck in a deep groove directly under the hatchet.

I had seen enough of the sickening sight, and

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walked away. This, then, was the guillotine! There were not many people around. A contrast to the fearfully crowded scene of our public executions in England in former times, witnessed by so many hardened criminals, who robbed their neighbours where they stood, for the hearts of but few who witnessed those awful scenes were softened by them. In every way, I think the unseen penalty of the law is good—good for the culprit, who has no incitement to make speeches, and cause a sensation; good for the public, as creating a certain awe of crime.

I was much struck, during our stay at Versailles, with the miserable way in which the streets were lighted at night at that period—a large rope hung across the street, on which was suspended one enormous oil-lamp. In many streets there was not even this, and in few two. His Majesty the King came every Friday to the palace from St. Cloud, under an escort of cavalry, and my daughter, being fond of witnessing any military movement, particularly of cavalry, induced me to walk with her to see his arrival. I remember well the long, pale face and unwieldy figure of Louis Philippe, sitting in the

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middle of his chariot. One morning I went to the large open space in front of the palace, to witness the inspection of a regiment of light dragoons. I never saw a worse performance. In marching past, they all lost their distances. My daughter, leaning on my arm, said,

"Why, papa, would not you die of shame if your corps did so badly?"

A French gentleman, standing close by, evidently understood her, and looking me full in the face, said,

"Oui, Monsieur, it is very badly done. They are not so well drilled as in your country, your English dragoons."

I raised my hat, and he returned the compliment in a most gentlemanly manner.

"Vous êtes militaire?" he said.

Of course I bowed.

"Ah! your cavalry," he said, in English, "are magnificent!"

When the French dragoons again trotted past, they made a still worse exhibition. The general officer inspecting them seemed very angry at the whole thing. I had never seen a French regiment together since I was in Portugal in 1810, and I thought to myself,

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"If this is the state of their cavalry, we have not much to fear from them."

The Winter months passed away. In March the snow was fast melting, and I thought of preparations for England. My landlord telling me that he intended quitting his present residence, and going to Paris, I sought out fresh apartments for my family, and found a very respectable, good house, with a walled-in garden of fruit-trees, and a pretty summer-house at one side. As it appeared to be the very place to suit us, I made arrangements for securing it in a fortnight. As soon as the snow permitted us to do so, we made an excursion to the Palace of St. Cloud. I visited the old château, in which I took a great interest, it having been the residence of the Kings of France, and of poor Josephine, where I think she passed the happiest part of her life as Empress. It was also interesting to me as the spot where Napoleon arranged his plans for his campaigns in Italy, and that to which he resorted on his disastrous return from Moscow.

I could not see any great beauty in the place, but it was a bad time of the year to ex-

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pect beauty. In the last week in March we removed, and to a more pleasant situation near the gardens. As I should soon leave for England myself, I thought it best to occupy a room on the ground-floor, leaving my wife and daughter in the upper apartment, a large double-bedded room, adjoining a handsomely-furnished drawing-room and dining-room. Our governess returned to England, though she longed to go into Italy with us. Our English maid slept on the same floor, up a few steps, as myself. A large open hall led to two or three other spacious, handsome rooms in the old château. The landlady and her husband seemed most quiet and good-natured people, ready to do anything to make us comfortable. There was a young man in the house, who I thought was their son, who was very civil and attentive to me, seeming to be every morning occupied in the garden, where I talked with him and smoked my cigar. It struck me more than once that he would stand and gaze at me in a stupid manner, then, suddenly recovering himself, become lively and talkative.

I think it was the fourth night after our ar-

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rival, that I was awakened at twelve o'clock by hearing a great noise in the adjoining room, as if people were jumping up and down. The noise ceased, then was renewed, and went on for an hour, after which I heard no more. In the morning, at eight o'clock, when the maid brought in some hot water, I asked her if she had heard any noise during the night.

"Noise, sir! I thought people were dancing all about the house."

I told her what I had heard. At breakfast I told Mrs. Loftus of this strange occurrence, but she and my child had slept soundly, and heard nothing. The next day my servant remarked to me in a whisper,

"Sir, I think we've got into a very strange house. I have seen two or three other strangers in it, opening the doors, looking out at me, and then disappearing."

The following night I got out my pistols, with a good walking-stick, and prepared myself for whatever might happen. Soon after twelve o'clock I heard a rumbling noise in the next room, as if some one were dragging a heavy table, without castors, along the floor. I

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struck a light, drew on my stockings, trousers and jacket, looked at the priming of my pistols, placed them in my pockets, put on my hat, and went out, stick in hand. I placed my candle on a table near the door, which I opened, expecting to find people outside, but not a soul was to be seen, and the noise had ceased. I took up my light and went into the next room. Here, likewise, "all was still." What could it mean? I knew not what to think, and was extremely puzzled.

I returned to my room, and laid myself down just as I was, keeping the light burning. Hearing no more, I fell asleep, and did not awake till eight in the morning. My maid coming in as usual, I interrogated her as to the night's hubbub. She said she had heard strange sounds during the night. I charged her to say nothing to her mistress or her young lady, and resolved to discover the cause in some way.

I had not seen the Chevalier Mechado for some days, being occupied, so I set out after breakfast to see him, but found, as I half feared might be the case, that he had already started for England two days previously, taking with him

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his two beautiful Arab horses and English servants. This was a disappointment. But on my return home, I found a friend from England, who was intending to remain in Paris for a few days, and promised to come and dine with me, which he did. Having related to him all the strange incidents of late, we agreed to watch together throughout that night. After dinner we walked out into the streets, bought some cigars, a bottle of brandy, some night-lights and matches.

We had music in the drawing-room, and at eleven o'clock my friend took leave of us, but it had been agreed between him and myself that he should take his departure from the front hall door, through which I should re-admit him quietly, unperceived by anyone, which I did, and took him to my room, the door of which we locked. We got out our bottle of brandy, made a glass of "grog" each, and, armed with a good cudgel, a pistol, and a cigar, we sat down to listen, and wait the result, now and then only speaking in a whisper. The long deep slow notes of the great clock announced the ominous hour of twelve, and we sat looking at each other

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in silence. Five minutes, or more, had elapsed, when a rumbling sound was heard, appearing to come from below us. B—— touched my knee, and looked very anxious, as this was his first introduction to the nocturnal row.

Suddenly the noise ceased below, but commenced in the next room, as if a heavy table were dragged along the floor. My friend ceased puffing his cigar, and we put on our hats, grasped our cudgels and pistols, and upon the noise being repeated, lighting another candle to leave in the room, we rushed suddenly into the next apartment, where everything was still. A door, however, I had not seen before, which opened into the next room, was just ajar, as if some one had passed through, and we both rushed at it, I warning B—— to see that the light did not go out, although we had matches with us. We entered a long narrow apartment, on the walls of which hung several pictures—in fact it was a gallery, and we both distinctly saw a figure in black swiftly, noiselessly quit the gallery by a door at the further end. "Forward! forward!" whispered B—— and forward we went. I entered a small room, in

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the centre of which, raised upon two long tressels, stood a large coffin, the sides draped in black cloth, descending to the floor. We stood aghast, gazing at it and upon each other. The whole thing, at that time of night, dark and dismal as everything looked, was worse than storming a battery amidst the enemy. There was no cheering on here from my pale-faced companion, whom I had known in younger days as no coward. Looking round, I saw on the left hand a door, also ajar, through which I saw a light, and which led into a passage, and behold there, at the foot of some steps which led to her room in this passage, which I now found led also to mine. stood our servant, partly dressed, with a loose wrapper, a candle in her hand, looking as pale as death. "Oh! sir," said she, "how glad I am to see you! I was coming to your room, sir—and I am so glad, Mr. B——, you are with master. I have heard such terrible groans and cries and hideous noises, as if people were dragging chains along the floors." We took the poor girl into our room, gave her some brandy and water, made her lie down on the bed, and lighting our pipes, we waited for

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the morning light, not the least knowing *what* to think of it all. As to spirits, they were too noisy to be anything but very living human *bodies!* I then sent Harriet to her own room, with strict injunctions to say nothing to her mistress of what she had heard and seen. As soon as he could prudently do so, my friend left the house, and returned to breakfast openly at nine o'clock, as if nothing had occurred. We had concluded that remaining in that house was not possible. I went to St. Germain, and took apartments there for my family; this was the more important, as I was going to England, B—— also, and we agreed to travel together. We both deemed it most prudent to say nothing of all the strange things we had heard and seen, and for these reasons: that if I sought the police on the subject, I should be called into court to prove what I suspected, that we had taken apartments in a *maison de santé;* and the accusation alone would have brought the owners into disrepute injurious to their character. Moreover, I should, in all probability, have to pay heavy damages; for, being English, they would surely give it against me in a court. This ad-

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vice I took from an English gentleman, an old officer, residing in Versailles, who well knew the French and their detestation of the English. The wisest thing, therefore, was to be silent, leave the house, and take another home at St. Germain till my return to France.

On our arrival in London, I went for some days to my sister's house in Cavendish Square, where I had several visits from my friend the Chevalier Mechado. I had several rides with him in the park, on one of his beautiful Arabs, the grey, my favourite; they were much admired by everyone. We dined together twice; he was as hospitable in England as he was in France. He took me twice to the Opera, knowing my delight in music. I found that he had several friends of consequence in London, who highly appreciated him, and thought him a good-hearted fellow, and a gentleman in every sense of the word. He was fond of English customs and manners. My readers will remember that Mechado was a Spaniard, and not a Frenchman; and he thought us "more comfortable" than the French. I related to him our Ver-

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sailles adventures in that queer house, and told him that I had sought his advice too late to find him. He said, as my English friend had done, that I had acted wisely in not seeking the aid of the police; for that, hating the English as they did, I should have received no redress at their hands.

From London I went to my old and tried friend, Lord Wodehouse, at Kimberley, where I remained for a week, having fixed that the corps should go on permanent duty at East Dereham.

At the time appointed for the meeting of the yeomanry cavalry, I found the corps assembled in a field belonging to Mr. Lee Warner of Quebec House, and marched them into the town. I shall not weary my readers with particulars of the drill and inspection of the troops, so often related. I found the same good feeling existing as ever, and everything passed off to my entire satisfaction, and to that of the Lord-Lieutenant, whose permission I then obtained to return to France. The Chevalier had also returned to Versailles, and invited us to spend a few days with him at his home.

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While there, we heard of a projected *soirée* to be given by the King to the English residents at Versailles. To my astonishment, I received an invitation, for which I think I was indebted to our English ambassador at Paris, who must have mentioned my name to Louis Philippe. Fortunately, I had with me my uniform, and was thus enabled to accept it. The King received us most courteously, and asked me if I was the son of General and Lady Elizabeth Loftus. On my reply in the affirmative, he said he remembered them both at Raynham, during a visit to my grandfather, who was very kind to him. We talked about the place, which he minutely described, apparently possessing a wonderfully accurate memory of the past. My uniform was very handsome, and the King asked me to what regiment I belonged. When I explained to him that I was Commandant of the yeomanry cavalry corps of Norfolk, he exclaimed—

"*C'est bien!* that regiment was the Norfolk Rangers, which the Marquis, your grandfather, raised."

"No, your Majesty, though the Rangers were

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raised by him, truly, and disbanded only a few years since. I belonged to it also; but my regiment has been raised since."

"Bien! C'est drôle cela."

The palace was brilliantly illuminated. Returning to St. Germain, we packed up, and started in the diligence for Lyons. Thinking to be by ourselves, snug, we took our places in the rotunda, which all travellers know is the hinder part of the carriage, holding but four or five people; so we took the whole for Lyons, before reaching which we bitterly repented our choice. The weather was hot, the dust was intolerable, following us in clouds, and to keep it out we were obliged to shut the windows, increasing the heat. I forget the different places through which we passed under these very "snug" and "comfortable" circumstances. There were no railways open further than to Orleans from Paris. The diligence at Paris was hoisted upon a truck upon the rail, and on reaching Orleans the horses were put to the carriage, and we started for Lyons, where we arrived late in the afternoon.

We took up our abode at the Hôtel du

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Nord for two days, visiting every place worth seeing, particularly the silk manufactories, &c. After breakfast on the third morning, having taken (wiser grown) our places in the interior of the diligence, we departed for Grenoble, where we arrived late in the evening. We went to the same hotel that Napoleon occupied on his way to Paris from Cannes, whence he issued that famous proclamation which brought thousands to his standard. I never wondered at the French people rallying round him, for he was indeed an extraordinary man. The cool courage he displayed on his march from Cannes to Lyons won upon the people, and was conspicuously shown each day of his nearer approach to Paris. The wonderful tact which he displayed when informed that Marshal Ney, at the head of the king's forces of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, amounting at least to forty thousand men, opposed his further advance, surpasses anything that I have read in ancient or modern history. In a carriage with four horses, driven by postilions, and escorted by a troop of hussars, who had joined him at Grenoble, he drove straight to the centre of the

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line of the king's army, and standing up in his carriage in his well-known attitude, with folded arms, in his cocked hat, he was at once recognised by thousands whom he had led to victory and glory against the combined powers of Europe, England excepted.

Of that famous proclamation I have a copy, and I subjoin it, because I find it is little known, and is certain to interest the young and enthusiastic.* How well Napoleon knew that volatile

* Bonaparte, on his way from Elba to Cannes, March 1st, 1815, at which latter place he landed with his followers, in all about 1,200 men, dictated two proclamations—one to to the French people, the other to the Army. The latter I subjoin. It was a soul-stirring and inspiring piece of eloquence, and had the effect he desired upon the minds of those who fought with him in Egypt, Italy, at the ever-memorable battle of Borodino, and who had witnessed his personal bravery on the field of battle.

"1st March, 1815.

"Soldiers,—We have not been conquered: two men, sprung from our ranks, have betrayed our laurels, their country, their benefactor, and their Prince. Those whom we have beheld for five and twenty years traversing all Europe to raise up enemies against us, in the ranks of foreign armies, and in cursing our beautiful France,—shall they pretend to command or to enchain our eagles? They, who have never been able to look them in the face?—shall we suffer them to inherit the fruit of our glorious toils,—to take possession of our honours? of our fortunes? to calumniate, to revile our glory?

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nation! His words of fire created such enthusiasm among the people, such fervour in the Army; and under this newly excited feeling, he marched into Belgium, there to make the last fatal throw of the dice, to return to Paris a ruined man. Had he succeeded in that last attempt to regain the lost past, none of us can tell what would have been the consequence.

There was much to interest us in Grenoble,

"If their reign were to continue, all would be lost, even the recollection of those memorable days. With what fury they misrepresent them! *They* seek to tarnish what the world admires; and if there still remain defenders of our glory, they are to be found among those very enemies whom we have confounded on fields of battle.

"Soldiers! In my exile I have heard your voice! I have come back in spite of all obstacles and all dangers. Your General, called to the throne by the voice of the people, and raised on your shields, is restored to you. Come and join him: mount the tri-coloured cockade: you wore it in the days of our greatness. We must forget that we have been the masters of nations, but we must not suffer any to intermeddle in our affairs. Who could pretend to be master over us? Who would have the power? Resume those eagles which you had at Ulm, at Austerlitz, at Jena, at Eylau, at Wagram, at Friedland, at Fulda, at Eckmuhl, at Essling, at Smolensko, at the Moskwa, at Lutzen, at Wurtzen, at Montmirail. The veterans of the armies of the Sambre and Meuse, of the Rhine, of Italy, of Egypt, of the West, of the grand army, are humiliated: their honourable scars are stained: their successes would be crimes, the brave would be rebels if, as the enemies of the people pretend, the

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and, curiously enough, I slept in the same bed which the Little Corporal had occupied while there. It was now the end of June, the weather very hot, and the mosquitoes very annoying. I visited more than once the strong castellated fortress, which commanded the valley below, and the town, the ascent to which was very steep and difficult of access. It was believed to be an impregnable fortress

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legitimate sovereigns were in the midst of the foreign armies. Honours, recompenses, favours, are reserved for those who have served with them against the country and against us.

"Soldiers! come and range yourselves under the banners of your chief: his existence is only made up of yours: his rights are only those of the people, and yours: his interest, his honor, his glory are no other than your interest, your honor, and your glory. Victory shall march at a charging step; the eagle with the national colours shall fly from steeple to steeple, till it reaches the towers of Notre Dame.

"Then you will be able to show your scars with honour; then you will be able to boast of what you have done; you will be the liberators of the country.

"In your old age, surrounded and looked up to by your fellow-citizens, they will listen to you with respect, as you recount your high deeds; you will, each of you, be able to say with pride, 'And I also made part of that grand army, which entered twice within the walls of Vienna, within those of Rome, of Berlin, of Madrid, of Moscow, and which delivered Paris from the stain which treason and the presence of the enemy had imprinted on it.'

"Honour to those brave soldiers, the glory of their country. "NAPOLEON."

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in former days, but since 1846 such improvements have been made in gunnery, that it is impossible to say what place can hold out against the power of gunpowder, shot, shell, electricity, and torpedoes. Another war—in which, I grieve to say, there seems to be some chance of our being engaged—would fearfully tell the tale. God grant that such a misfortune as an appeal to arms may not compel us again to take the field. Come what may, I am sure that England will do her duty, as her faithful Ministers are now doing to avert, in all honour, such a calamity, the effects of which are felt for years. Fathers and mothers mourn the loss of a much-loved gallant son, sisters of a brother, and the fair maid of her lover. There are gaps in every family circle, among high and low, the rich, the poor, and many such have I witnessed in my life.

We waited in Grenoble for the arrival of our luggage, and decided upon going for the remainder of the Summer to a small watering-place twenty miles from it, higher up towards the hill country. We travelled by diligence to a small hotel at Alevart, where we

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remained for two days, when we took a small house with a large garden, already full of fruit and vegetables, of which we had the use, taking as much as we required. There was a vast difference in that country from that in which I am now residing—not that the vegetables were more plentiful, the beef and mutton more abundant, but they were considerably cheaper in every way. Some years ago it was said in England "that when Free Trade was established, every article of food would be less in price." Sir Robert Peel said in Parliament, "Buy in the cheapest market, and sell in the dearest." There was, in my opinion, little necessity to give that sort of advice to the English people, of whom Napoleon contemptuously and angrily said, "that they were a nation of shopkeepers." There was much truth in the spiteful remark—our trade with foreign countries has certainly made us a wealthy people. We lend money to all the world—more than twenty of the civilized nations of the world are indebted to the British nation, from whom they have obtained nearly all the money they have borrowed. It has been asked how is it

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that these Islanders, upon so small a spot on the face of this earth, have grown so rich? The answer is, by their trade, their commerce; and so long as they undersell all other nations in their manufactured goods, they will continue to grow rich. But a stop must be put to their system of strikes and "intimidation," in trades and in the labouring classes, by some means. But there is one reason far above all these—it is that the hand of the Almighty has watched over, has protected us. Look at the twenty-eighth chapter of Deuteronomy, and read the remarkable words: "The Lord shall open unto thee his good treasure; the Heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand, and you shall lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow," and I believe England to be the nation spoken of.

To make these remarks, I have diverged from my subject, which I could not help doing. The difference between living in France and England was so great that it caused numerous families to break up their establishments and reside in France, Italy, Germany, and other

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countries, as they do to this day. Servants are thrown out of employment, and forced to seek other situations, or means of living, greatly owing to their own selfishness and greed, caring little for anybody or anything but their beef, potatoes, pudding, and as much beer as they like; but to be abroad free of all these encumbrances is a luxury.

After ten days at Alevart, we made an excursion towards the mountains, my wife and daughter on donkeys, while our servant and I walked. We carried a small basket of sandwiches, some country wine, and hired a young Savoyard lad of sixteen, who knew the country. It was a most interesting day. Our object was to go up what is called the Ascent. Situated under the snowy heights, hanging over them like clouds, were beautiful plains of grass for feeding cattle. Here came numerous sheep, oxen, cows, &c., during the hot Summer months, everything being dried up below by the sun, with the exception of three lands running close by the banks of the Isère. We had to cross several ravines, and to persons unaccustomed to this sort of thing it is most hazardous to cross

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upon five or six large fir-trees laid close together; and if your donkey should slip his foot through any opening, you would surely be lost. I made my two ladies dismount and walk over, but the *garçon* rode one donkey and led the others, with the greatest *sangfroid*. It was curious to watch the clever and easy way of the donkeys in passing over, putting their feet in the centre of each tree. When we arrived at the top we were glad to sit down and eat our luncheon, it being so hot walking up the mountain, though I had put on a light shooting-jacket I had brought from Norfolk; but what was comfortable at dear old Stiffkey and Morston was far too hot for the regions on the borders of Savoy. The beauty of the contrast of the snowy white and the verdant green below repaid our toil. On descending, the Savoyard pointed out the track of a bear. Early on the morning of the second day after, we were roused by a great commotion, all going out from our house in search of the brute, which had killed two cows. I, too, joined in the chase. He was caught and killed, and weighed thirty stone—a huge fellow.

During our stay here, I received a letter from

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my most esteemed friend, Lord Wodehouse, the father of the Honourable Mrs. Richard Phayre of Raynham, informing me of the death of Lady Wodehouse. The whole style of that letter left a deep impression upon my mind—so full of feeling and sorrow for the loss he had sustained, at the same time expressing great warmth of heart towards myself, full of resignation to the will of God. If I *had* ever entertained the slightest doubt in my mind, which I never had, of the amiable disposition and kind heart of the writer, it would, at once, have been dispelled by the perusal of this letter. The man whom I had known for years as the great leader of the loyalists in my county, against the party who had joined the destructive element against the tried institutions of their country, and whom I had so often met at the festive board, as well as in his own home, cheering on the right-minded lovers of their country, was now cast down by the stroke of death in that dear old home; and I thought of those lines of L. E. L. upon the worm:

> "Rich are the dainties which he knows :
> From beauty's pale lips sips the dew,
> Diets on her velvet rose,
> And eats the heart of valour, too."

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She was most amiable and benevolent, and was beloved by all who knew her.

I often took my fishing-rod, and walking along the banks of the Isère, tried to hook a trout, as we had several times dined at the *table-d'hôte*, where I found generally some fine trout. Inquiring where they were procured, I learnt that they were caught in that river, not far distant from the village. But I was no fly-fisher, my sight was too bad for that; but one day I took the *garçon* who attended us when we rode, and he showed me how *he* used to catch them—*i.e.*, with a large worm, the very thing to which I had been accustomed from a boy at Stiffkey, where I had landed many a good trout. The lad took me to a bend in the river, over which hung some trees. He brought simply a long pole, on which he had a line. I took my small rod and reel, and put all together in order, but the boy with his pole and line soon took the conceit out of me; before my rod was ready, he had caught a nice trout! I tried my luck, but never got a bite. The simple *garçon* was like David with his sling and the stone from the brook.

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Another day I went higher up the fall, but had no better success. The stream was very rapid. While up here, my attention was attracted by the boy, and looking up, I saw, at a great height, two magnificent eagles. Had Napoleon been present, his superstitious mind would have seen a prediction of success in whatever his thoughts were meditating, probably some project of conquest, on the appearance of "his eagles." These eagles, slowly sailing on their majestic way over the mountains, were certainly magnificent birds, which seemed to be steering towards the Alpine regions. The lad said, "The eagles often come over there—they have their nests up in the rocky mountains, and would sometimes come down and kill the young lambs while feeding, and take the fowls. Carrying off a duck was nothing to them!" I wished I had a good rifle, but the height was too great and my sight too bad for shooting. Besides, why part two such happy creatures, which looked like two great Norfolk turkeys, even at that distance. It would have been a pity to touch them, and "how one would miss the other on those lonely rocks!" I thought.

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It was in this neighbourhood, and not far from where we resided, that Mrs. Radcliffe laid the scene of her "Mysteries of Udolpho," which, as a boy, I read with such keen delight, and have not forgotten. All the beautiful scenery around is faithfully described in that work. After I had been over to Grenoble, in the diligence, in the month of September, I think, I made arrangements for all our luggage to be sent forward when written for, and we hired a small sort of waggon with one horse, and started off, as soon as the luggage arrived, across the mountains for Chambéry.

A young man drove the long, low van or waggon, on springs, which had belonged to a French gentleman travelling with his family, who sold it. I placed Mrs. Loftus and the maid in the back part, and the luggage in the front; and my daughter occupied the front seat with myself. The whole of the house came out early in the morning to see us start, all wonderfully surprised to see us make so little of what they considered a most dangerous journey, saying that we should surely be stopped by brigands

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and robbed. I showed them my pistols and sword-stick, at which they shrugged their shoulders, exclaiming, "Ah! these English—they have no fear."

I had fear, nevertheless, but considered that, if we could pass the border into Savoy before dark, we should be safe; and this we did by my urging on the driver, telling him I would pay him well if we reached the border and the Custom-house by three o'clock. However, we did not do so till soon after four, passing through the most beautiful and romantic country, and skirting round the edges of the mountains. On a very fair road we got upon the level way from Grenoble to Chambéry. By this route we saved both considerable distance and expense. Arriving at the border of Savoy, we were stopped by the douaniers and the gendarmes, all looking mighty fierce in cocked hats and big moustaches. The first question asked, of course, was,

"Have you anything to declare, monsieur?"

"Non."

"Votre passeport?"

"Oui."

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Then they surveyed the boxes, &c., and shrugged their shoulders.

"Mon Dieu! quelle quantité de bagage!"

The douaniers proceeded to uncord two boxes, one of which contained books, not one word of which could they read. After asking a few questions, they ceased examining any farther. The lad had taken the horse, a very good one, to a small inn for refreshment for himself and it. We had intended to remain here for the night, but finding that by cutting across country we were now nearer to Chambéry than we had anticipated, we determined to continue our journey, which we did, and reached Chambéry at eight o'clock. We entered a good hotel (the name of which I forget) without accident, though we had nearly encountered one by the adventurous conduct of the driver of our carriage. When the diligence from Grenoble crossed into our road, he tried to race against it, in spite of my remonstrances, and those of the travellers by it. Seeing the danger of our being turned over down a steep bank into the river, I jumped off the box, seized the horse's head, and stopped him.

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Upon this the *voiturier* getting down, and being impertinent, I gave him a crack across the face, at which the travellers on the diligence, which had stopped, called out "Bravo! monsieur," and he was so astonished that he cried "Peccavi!" and hearing them declare "I ought to inform against him," I now made him follow their carriage all the way, and glad enough were we to reach our destination in safety.

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CHAPTER XI.

Chambéry—Mount Cenis—Turin—Bullocks, Horses, or Mules—A Comical Disaster—Descent of Mount Cenis—Turin—Astonishing a Priest—Piedmont—The Waldenses—Colonel Beckwith—Dorcas Party—Carlo Alberto and the Priesthood—Bibles burnt by the Priests—Sport in the Valley—Genoa—Leghorn—Italian Facchini—Valiant Thieves—Captain Henchett's Gold Chain—Death of Lord Wodehouse—Il Terremoto.

ON our arrival at Chambéry, we found a very comfortable hotel, in which we enjoyed our supper and good beds. I paid our driver, who looked dreadfully frightened for fear I should go to the bureau and inform the police of his conduct. I took a receipt from him in the presence of our landlord, and saw no more of him. The next morning we rose early, and after a capital breakfast on coffee, eggs, and rolls, sallied out to see the lions. We were charmed with the city—the houses looked so clean, roofed with shining tin. We strolled into the gardens and elsewhere till four o'clock, re-

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turning to our hotel and the *table d'hôte* at five. Here we met one of the travellers by the diligence.

We remained at Chambéry two more days, and then made arrangements for going on to Turin over Mount Cenis. A French lady and gentleman hearing this, and wishing to take the same route, we agreed to hire a "vetturino" between us. I made an engagement with a man to whom we were recommended to pay so much a head, to be carried in a given time over Mount Cenis, on the other side of which we were to sleep at Seusa, a small but straggling town.

On examining the carriage, I found it very roomy, and quite capable of holding five people inside. However, I went outside with the servant, on a comfortable front seat, the owner and driver of the carriage being on a little seat to my right. I have often remarked the great comfort of the carriages which we met with in Italy, and on its borders, that are let out on hire to convey families. They were fully as large, if not larger than our own old-fashioned family coaches, and had very high wheels, mak-

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ing them run so easily. A bar, running round above the roof, kept the luggage in safety. At six in the morning we started. The French gentleman politely declined to take the hinder seat. The morning was beautiful as we passed through the country where Napoleon's legions had so often marched, and he pointed out to me the spot from which the Emperor had slung across a deep ravine two cannon by ropes, in order to take a position which he desired to occupy, and I perfectly understood, from his explanation, the very clever way in which this feat had been accomplished.

We reached the foot of Mount Cenis at two o'clock, and, to my astonishment, there was a most beautiful road. Here were collected bullocks, mules, and horses, ready to be put on to our carriage, the men in charge chattering in broken French and Italian, a most unintelligible jargon, which was perfect humbug to me. I left all matters to our *voiturier* to settle. He had agreed to make the journey, the means I left to him, and he fixed upon two bullocks, which were hooked on in front of our horses. I alighted, and started off on foot, and was

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soon a long way in advance, when I saw coming down the mountain, at same distance, a small four-wheeled open carriage, coming on at a great pace, driven by a postilion wearing an immense pair of jack-boots. When just in front of me, as I moved to make way for the carriage, down fell the near horse, pitching his unfortunate rider flat on his back into the middle of the road. I took the horse's head, and assisted the postilion on to his legs, and to raise the horse and put the harness in order. In the carriage sat a well-dressed, gentlemanly-mannered man, wearing a gold-laced military cap, blue frock-coat, embroidered all over the breast in black braid, and red-striped trousers. My reader will naturally suppose that this personage was some military magnate, travelling upon important service. Alas! no. He had in charge three enormously large and high glass jars, full of black leeches, taken from the Italian lakes, and now on their way to be sold at the fair at Grenoble. One of these jars, placed on the seat opposite the owner, had received such a shock that it rolled off into the road with a crash, and was

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broken, and out crawled the leeches in every direction. I helped to pick up many of them, and we filled the other two jars with those still in the broken glass, for which service I received *mille remerciments*. I took care to throw out of the way on the mountain side the broken débris of glass, which might have injured the feet of the horses of the carriage with my party, which, all this having taken some time to accomplish, now joined me, and much amused they all were at the adventure. I certainly thought it remarkably comical that *I*, who had experienced so painfully long an acquaintance with leeches for my poor eyes, should renew it in this fashion, and help to deprive so many of them of liberty on the side of Mount Cenis!

Proceeding on our way, we at length arrived at the top of the mountain, followed by five or six lazy fellows, pretending that they accompanied us in case of an accident, of which I had seen no fear the whole way up. With four English post-horses, we could have trotted nearly the whole length of the road, so good was it in many parts. In some places, on the left, it looked rather frightful; but there was space

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enough for three carriages abreast, and in the most dangerous parts there was a strong stone parapet, two feet high. On our arrival, of course there was the usual clatter in the hotel. Our driver took off the bullocks and horses, and went to feed the latter, while we all agreed to dine upon veal cutlets and trout, caught in the lake at no great distance, as we saw from the windows. There was a garden and a shrubbery, and my daughter and I walked down to a few small cottages, and talked with the inhabitants. They said the place was cold and dreary in Winter. Still they seemed happy and contented, and found employment in clearing the road of the snow, for travellers and the mails, from Savoy into Piedmont.

After our repast, we proceeded down the mountain, and the descent, I confess, looked very frightful in many places, as there was not the slightest parapet to prevent our being precipitated over into what appeared a bottomless abyss. I put the servant inside, and took my daughter, who had cool courage, with me, and she said not a word; but I heard from those behind us exclamations in English

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and French—"Oh! oh! we must, we shall go over!" and then, "Il n'y a pas de danger, Madame." Notwithstanding these comforting assurances, I felt very grateful when we safely reached the bottom, and found ourselves in a snug hotel. This journey, which took us so many hours to accomplish, is now done in forty minutes through the tunnel finished during the last few years—a most wonderful work of excavation. We got good beds, and enjoyed our coffee and poached eggs, &c.

Next morning, we went on to Turin, where we arrived at four o'clock at a good hotel, in which we remained for a week or more, visiting everything most worth seeing—the cathedral, the palace of the sovereigns, the university, the gardens, and the arsenal. I called upon the English ambassador, from whom I procured the necessary order to see all these places of interest. In the palace there were some handsome paintings by the ancient masters.

One morning, my daughter and I went to see the guards mounting on duty; another day, to view the evolutions of a regiment of Lancers. They were well dressed, and appeared to me

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to be well drilled; their horses seemed good and stout, but small; but I thought that one of our Light Dragoon regiments would knock them to pieces in a charge.

There are several fine squares in the city. Walking about one evening in one of these, we were attracted by an immense crowd, when I witnessed a ceremony of which I had often read, but had never yet seen—"the raising of the host," as it is called; a great number of priests carrying the host—*i.e.*, as *they* say, the body of Christ. The crowd was so great that I could not get near enough to distinguish then what it was which the priests in their vestments were continually raising above the heads of the people, who fell on their knees as the procession marched along in slow and solemn step. I was told that there could not have been less than twenty thousand people collected in that square near the palace. Carlo Alberto, the reigning sovereign of Sardinia, was a bigoted Papist.

There was much talk of an event which had occurred previous to our arrival. The Dutch minister's daughter, a very handsome girl, had been inveigled away by some of the priests, and

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for more than a week, unknown to her father, confined in a convent. At last the place of her concealment was discovered, and the release of his daughter immediately demanded by her father. The king for some time paid no attention to the demand, but at last he was compelled to do so; he issued his royal mandate to the priesthood, insisting that the girl should be given up. I felt extremely uneasy with regard to my daughter, then little more than sixteen, whose beautifully fair complexion, light shining hair, and pretty figure, attracted the gaze of the swarthy Italians, but particularly that of the priests, who persistently followed us about wherever we went. I carried a good stout English oak walking-stick, and I resolved that, if any of these black-coated gentlemen (whose dress our English clergy of the High Church type affect to imitate, and do it so effectually that one cannot distinguish them from their Romish brethren) ventured to speak to or molest her, I would give him as good a thrashing as ever he had in his life, even as penance.

Looking over the books in a stall one day, I saw two of these *mauvais sujets* in holy garb,

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who had followed us, and were now close behind, one of whom poked his head in between my daughter and myself, as if desirous to see what we were examining, while his eyes were fixed on my daughter's face. Pretending not to know he was there, I suddenly turned round, and sent my elbow such a dig into his stomach as astonished his weak mind, and nearly knocked him over, while he exclaimed—"Ah, Monsieur!"

"Eh, Monsieur," I retorted, "que voulez-vous!"—at which he and his companion marched off, talking earnestly together.

On the same evening, when walking out alone, I fell in with these two gentry, accompanied by two others, who, as soon as they perceived me, nudged each other. As I passed, I looked them full in the face, as much as to say, "I have no fear of *you*," which, I believe, is the only way to treat these cunning inventors of burdens for the shoulders of their victims.

Having agreed to visit the valley of Piedmont, of which we had heard and read so much, we engaged a *vetturino* to carry us and our luggage to Letour, about thirty miles from Turin, and started off at nine o'clock one fine morning

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for that beautiful and most romantic scene. It was four o'clock when we reached the entrance of the valley, our *voiturier* not being well acquainted with the road, and never having been that way but once before. From information I acquired, it appeared to me and my daughter, who spoke Italian fluently, and better French than myself, that the inhabitants of Turin had a great fear of those of the valley, whom they thought a dangerous and savage race. The history of their gallant defence against the French, the Roman Catholics of Savoy and Italy, and the army of Louis XIV., had from that epoch been handed down from father to son; but the memory of their noble heroism had created no sympathy in the minds of their fellow-countrymen; but, on the contrary, had excited a prejudice, which prevailed at the time I was in the country, and no one had encouraged this ungenerous prejudice more than did the King himself. I have no doubt that some of my readers will have perused the full and interesting history of the Waldenses, by Gillies; therefore I shall not enter into a narrative of the events related in that work, which so ably

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describes the manner in which these valleys came into the possession of the followers of St. Paul, who worked their way from idolatrous Rome against every difficulty, and established the true Protestant faith of the Scriptures in opposition to the ignorance and superstition of the Roman hierarchy, a faith which they have maintained to this day. I never saw a more lovely spot than that sweet valley of Letour, on the side of the mountain, a fine river running through it—on the left, a beautiful plain of meadows, on the right, sloping down to the river's bank, a charming expanse of grass lands, extending for some miles, which had the appearance of a fine English park, the resemblance being enhanced by the growth of the finest oak, ash, acacia, and walnut-trees I ever saw, from the last of which was produced a large quantity of fine oil. I have often wondered that since our country grows such magnificent walnut-trees, which live to a great age, we have not cultivated that tree more than we do.

We drove to a small, comfortable hotel, situated near the river, and there remained four days, when we took a small house higher up,

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not far from the entrance to the valley. It took us, of course, some little time to become fully acquainted with the customs and manners of this primitive and amiable people, of whom the more we saw the more we admired them. We went to the church, about half a mile distant on the rising slope of the valley, over which hung the shade of magnificent trees, not only affording protection from the sun in the hot weather, but shelter from the winds and rains when it was stormy. The church was, indeed, a most primitive building, with white-washed walls. In the centre stood a pulpit in the old style, with a sounding board overhead, and along each side were open seats, for those who came to worship there, as the true followers of our Lord. The service commenced by the reading of two chapters in the Bible, from both the Old and New Testaments, then a hymn was sung, after which came an extemporary prayer, followed by a sermon, and concluding with a hymn and the blessing.

The people treated us with respect and regard. A Madame Birt called upon us, an English lady, who had married an Italian

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gentleman, resident in the valley, possessing considerable property and a most comfortable château, a mile from the village. From this lady we obtained much information concerning the inhabitants. We also received a visit from Colonel Beckwith, who had built a house, and occupied a farm and dairy, the cows in which reminded me much of those I had seen in the islands of Alderney and Guernsey. Colonel Beckwith was adored by the people, for whom he had built two churches at his own expense, and had spent more than ten thousand pounds in improvements, and in helping those who required assistance to carry on their farms, or the dairies, which were kept by many of them. A curious custom prevailed here. The women assembled by invitation to a Dorcas party, held in the Winter months. They used to meet in the stable where the cows stood in rows, and sat by their sides, on clean sand, diligently engaged on some feminine task. The warmth of the cows, which were littered on clean straw, saved fuel. Lanterns were hung over the heads of the women, by the light of which in this curious parlour they performed

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their work. We went to several of these Dorcas parties while at Letour. Colonel Beckwith told me he often attended a party by invitation. We went one evening; but it was before the short days set in, and the low sheds were only partially lighted up.

We dined several times with the gallant Colonel, who also came to visit us. He was a Waterloo hero, and had lost a leg in that memorable battle. He had a small, comfortable house, which he had furnished in the English style; he had also taken up the brick floors and laid down boards. I found he had two small active horses, and having a side saddle, bridle, &c., with us, we were enabled to enjoy several rides. While we were there, an English family arrived, and put up at the hotel, but only for a few days, to see the silk works of a large manufactory, the owners of which came from Turin. It was very curious to watch the spinning of the silkworms, of which there was a large quantity, fed here with mulberry leaves, or lettuce plants when the leaves failed.

A circumstance occurred greatly disturbing the peace so long subsisting among the Pro-

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testant inhabitants. Carlo Alberto had been persuaded by priestly influence to break into the stronghold of what the Roman Catholics styled the heretic community, and build a Roman Catholic church. The church was erected, but it was with the greatest difficulty that the King could be persuaded to enter the valley to perform the office of opening it in person. Although assured by a noble Italian marquis that His Majesty had no more loyal subjects in all his dominions than those dwelling in the Valley of Piedmont, it was a hard task to persuade him, and when he did go he was accompanied by a regiment of cavalry, ten thousand infantry, and several pieces of artillery. The whole of the inhabitants of the valley turned out, and lined the roads to Letour. I was told there assembled forty thousand people or more, a great proportion of whom were armed, and fired a *feu de joie* as His Majesty passed, in an awful fright lest *he* should be shot—for a spiritual tyrant, whether king, pope, or priest, is ever a rank coward. He was quite astonished that all should have passed off so loyally among the Protestant heretics.

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When the service for the opening of the church commenced, the Protestants of the community retired to their homes. The consecration was performed with all the ceremonial of the Church of Rome, her priests in fantastic garb flitting about in every direction. Madame Birt said the whole thing was most distasteful —like a scene got up, with little of reality of feeling or reverence—a sensuous affair altogether. The organ, which was very fine, was the great attraction. The "host" was carried through the town with Roman pomp, the Protestant people remaining in their houses and cottages whilst it passed, conduct which seriously annoyed the bigoted King. By the assistance of friends, the people had obtained a good supply of Bibles translated into Italian.

On a visit which we made higher up the mountain to a pretty village, we were informed of a startling event connected with the destruction of Bibles. As we proceeded further on, we came to another village, which had been evidently destroyed by fire—and how? Soon after the opening of the Roman Catholic church, the priests made every effort, by every means

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in their power, to obtain possession of the Bibles, and, in many instances, they succeeded, but more especially in this doomed village, where they had by subtle wiles and falsehoods worked upon the fears and minds of the simple inhabitants, and induced them to deliver up their Bibles to them on a certain day; and these holy (?) fathers, confessors, as they call themselves, piled up these books, the Word of God, and burnt them to ashes. What happened? The next day the village was burnt to the ground! The lives of the inhabitants were saved, but the place was an utter ruin. The origin of the fire was a mystery. A cottage caught fire, no one knew how, on the side of the mountain, and the wind blowing fresh, the fire spread rapidly, till scarcely one stone was left standing. It was like the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, a punishment for their want of courage to stand fast in their Christian faith.

This dire calamity had a wonderful effect upon all the villages of the valley, and was eloquently dilated upon by the Protestant clergy. It created a more sore dismay among

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the Roman population—ay, *Roman*, for are they not Papists? Why, then, are they ashamed of their own proper designation, and assume to themselves the title of Catholic, or Universal? Theirs is not, and never will be, the one universal faith, for what is untrue can never be universal. That which is true can alone be universal truth. Does God's truth require that, to prove it, it should be burned by priests of that Church which assumes to itself that it is the only true Church of God?

We had not been at Letour more than a month when I was seized with a violent attack of rheumatism, and similar pains to those from which I had suffered so long after my terrible fall upon the deck at sea. My left eye was also again much inflamed. With care, however, I soon recovered.

Colonel Beckwith lent me a double-barreled gun, and I went, with a clever young sportsman of the village, who had a long single-barreled gun, up the rugged parts of the mountains, where I shot two beccaficos, a bird from Africa, frequenting the mountainous districts at certain times of the year, and much sought after by the

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lovers of good eating. They are not so big as a partridge. The head is small, and, with the breast, is brown. The back is grey, the feathers in the wing long, red, white, and blue in colour. They are evidently birds of passage, and derive their name from their love of figs, arriving when these are ripe, and after a time disappearing again. This was the history given me of these pretty birds, which we found very good.

We saw, too, a chamois, too far off for our shot; but my pleasant companion killed two hares, one much larger than the other, nearly white, and apparently similar to our long-eared, tame rabbit, which I could not help thinking, when fattened to a large size, as it is sold in London, belongs to the same race of animals, an opinion in which Colonel Beckwith agreed with me. There were wild goats also on these mountains, and we often had a kid brought by the chasseur.

Soon after this time, we were joined by an old friend who was going into Italy to spend the Winter, the Reverend Frederick Birch, son of Wyrly Birch, Esq., of Wretham Hall, near Thetford. From his family I always received

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the greatest kindness and attention, and particularly from Mr. Henry Birch of Lincoln's Inn. We remained here a week longer, and then, having hired a vetturino, we all started off *en route* for Genoa, stopping on our way at a great hotel close to the plains of Marengo, where Napoleon fought that famous battle, which, in fact, he had lost, but regained by the gallant charge of cavalry under the French general commanding that force, who came upon the flank of the Austrians like a thunderbolt, and decided the fate of the day. De Bourrienne's Memoirs of Napoleon graphically describe the whole scene. Here we drank some of the famous wine of Asti, made from the grape grown in that district. The next evening we arrived late at Genoa. Having risen early, I walked over the plain of Marengo, and then took up our quarters at an hotel overlooking the Mole, having a view of the house, the battery, and the Doria Palace.

Genoa has been so often described by travellers and Murray, whose red book you see in the hands of every Englishman, that I prefer my readers should trust to him rather than

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to any description that I can give. We were charmed with the place, where I had been previously, as I have related in the former work on the events of "My Youth." We had written from Letour to Grenoble to send on our three heavy trunks which we left there. Looking out of our window one afternoon into the street, with Birch and my daughter, we observed a great tilted waggon, through the opening in front of which I saw sticking out, to my astonishment, my old family trunk. We ran downstairs, opened the door, got all three trunks out safely, and paid the carriage, stopping them on their way to the office. We found everything right and safe, though evidently all had been routed up by the Custom House officers on entering Savoy, again in Italy, and once again in Sardinia. The keys were fastened to the boxes, and I therefore think that we were very well treated; I much question whether they would have been so safe in our own country, after passing through so many hands.

Having stayed ten days at Genoa, we took our places on board the packet for Leghorn, starting at five in the evening, and arrived

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there at eight next morning. We found every comfort on board this vessel, which was English, carrying passengers from London to Gibraltar, Marseilles, Genoa, Saint Galle, and Naples. There was an Italian line of steamers, which I much preferred to our own vessels, their fares being so much more reasonable, their provisions better supplied and better cooked, by far more civil and attentive servants. But I found that the crew who managed the steam department in these Italian vessels were all English. It was a curious fact that the gas with which Genoa and Leghorn were lighted was produced from English coal, actually sold cheaper in those cities than it could be purchased in London. Such was the case in 1846, when I was in Italy. What it is now, since the "unions" and "strikes," which immediately raised the price of every article of fuel, I do not know; but I can conceive that the Italians must ere this have discovered that their own native olive oil would be cheaper to them than gas from English coal, conveyed from Newcastle to the Mediterranean.

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We went to a French hotel at Leghorn, where we had most comfortable and reasonable rooms; and thence to Pisa to see the leaning tower, and to secure apartments. Having letters of introduction to the Reverend Mr. Green, the English clergyman, we soon found all we required in the Via Grande, in a house kept by an old gentleman and his wife, with one son, a dapper little fellow (an "artiste," a painter, whom we styled "the little man"), all good and amiable people.

We went by railway to Pisa, and procured two porters, or facchini, to convey our luggage on two hand-trucks to our lodgings. Mr. Birch agreeing to follow with the ladies, I went forward, and on arriving at the door, I found six stout fellows, all handling something, even if only a bandbox, so that they might have a pretence to demand payment. I told them to let the things drop, an injunction to which they paid no attention, so, going up to each man, I took the parcel or basket from him, and placed them together near the door. "The little man" appearing, they all made a rush at him, upon which I pushed in with my good stick between

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them and my property, and thus we stood at bay. One of them, however, managed to seize upon a bandbox, but I gave him a push which made him fall over the wheel of the truck, flat on his back into the street. This astonished a little their weak minds, and Birch coming up at the time, the ladies preceding him, and seeing the position I was in, told our two hired men to take charge of our things, and not let the others touch them; but they shrugged their shoulders, and looked irresolute. Birch and I began putting the parcels, &c., inside our door, on which they ran forward, but we met them, flourishing our sticks over our heads, and made a grand charge at these extortionate thieves. The six stout men took to their heels, and scampered off down the street, in fear of two "Signori Inglesi," as they called us, and their stout English cudgels, the effects of which, perchance, they knew. With the assistance of the other two, we got all our property put away, paid them, and had no more trouble with the facchini, though I often saw them at the station. Their conduct had been very outrageous for years, and I heard from travellers that there has

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been an improvement in this respect, the Government having been compelled to interfere.

After settling ourselves at Pisa, we all went, in January, to Florence, taking with us "Maddalena," and her son, "the little man," who, being an artist, would be able to show us the fine arts of the beautiful city. We visited all the galleries, containing pictures so often described, besides beautiful marble statues, and struck with admiration indeed was I when I stood before the lovely Venus, many copies of which have been made; but none that I have ever seen, from the hands of modern artists, equal it in beauty. During the fortnight we were at Florence we visited the Bobili Palace, the residence of the Grand Duke, and saw all the paintings there. We required no Murray for guide—the little man was a great help.

On our return to Pisa, we found the Opera open, and enjoyed it exceedingly, obtaining the best places for half-a-crown in English money. Of course, half my readers will say, "Oh! that could not be worth hearing!" I beg to observe that it was well worth hearing. At a party given by an Italian Marquise, I met, singular to

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say, General Grouchy, who failed to make his appearance, as Napoleon expected, on the 18th June, 1815. But I believe that was no fault of Grouchy's, who had quite enough to do to hold his own on that memorable day. I had a slight conversation with him, and found him polite to me. Hearing that I was an English officer, he asked me to what regiment I had belonged. On being told the Coldstream Guards, he said,

"Ce régiment qui a defendu Hougomont," shrugging his shoulders, and looking me over from head to foot, as I replied,

"Oui, Monsieur!" And not another word did he utter.

We became acquainted with several English families, among others that of Mr. Lombe of Norfolk, who was lame, and resided in Pisa; also Captain Hanchett, R.N., a gallant officer, of whom I have spoken in my earlier life, who commanded a ship under Lord Cochrane in South America. One evening, at a party, the gallant gentleman made his appearance well dressed, a massive gold chain hanging from his neck, cable-pattern and attached to his watch in his

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waistcoat pocket. I was sitting on a sofa with an English lady, when he came to speak to us. He was bowing to the latter, whom he knew, when she exclaimed,

"Dear me, Captain Hanchett, what a beautiful chain you are wearing, what lovely gold!"

"Yes, Madam," said he, looking most demurely at it. "This chain was made out of the leg of the Virgin Mary!"

An exclamation of horror burst from the lips of the lady, who was a Roman Catholic. Hanchett explained that he and his crew had carried off, from a church on the South American coast, a large golden image of the Virgin, a leg of which, on its division, fell to his share. The chain was an exceedingly handsome one. The captain was always anxious, in any way, to assist the Pisans in their troubles. When the Revolution broke out to dethrone the Grand Duke, he tried his utmost to assemble the Civic Guard, in order to oppose the rebels coming from Leghorn, but it was impossible to rouse them in defence of their sovereign; they were too great poltroons to show any pluck. On my return from England, after the Revolution, I

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found a letter with a plan for the defence of Pisa against any more incursions of rebels, and a very clever scheme it was—from Hanchett—which I put into execution, upon hearing that two thousand and odd rebels were coming to pillage Pisa, joined by the Revolutionary Livornese Guards we had already there. The English gentleman managing the railway from Pisa to Leghorn, we persuaded to go to Lucca, and procure, if possible, two hundred Dragoons, who, loyal to the Grand Duke, and therefore driven from Pisa, we knew were there. He persuaded the officer in command to come to the Lucca Gate of Pisa at two o'clock in the morning, and we laid a plan for him to send a carriage on before to the gate with a sick person for the hospital. When the gate was opened on this plea, in rushed the Dragoons, and thus, only the week before the arrival of the Austrians, the town was saved from pillage and murder.

On going to England this year, 1846, previous to what I have just related, on my yeomanry duty, I proceeded to Kimberley, where Lord Wodehouse, having expressed a wish to inspect the Hingham men, gave them a dinner,

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at which I missed the presence of one kind face, that of the loved and lamented lady of the mansion. I thought, however, I had never seen my old friend himself looking better and in higher spirits than he was during my week's stay with him. The troops were inspected at Cromer by Colonel Smyth of the Blues. At the expiration of this duty, I went to Mr. Wyndham of Felbrigg Hall for a few days, where I met many friends and a hearty welcome. I also received an invitation to stay with Lord Hastings, but to my sorrow, a few days after my return to Morston, previous to leaving, I received the intelligence that my kind and valued friend Lord Wodehouse was no more. I returned to London, and thence journeying to Italy, arrived at Leghorn, where I found letters awaiting me, urging my prompt return to Pisa, as it was in such a troubled state. I went with my family to the sulphur baths of Cassiano, and took rooms in a small hotel, among the olive groves. The weather was intensely hot, no rain falling for many weeks. My friend Birch joined us here, but the heat became so unbearable that we took a vettura and started for Antignano, a little

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watering-place three miles from Leghorn, where I found very comfortable apartments.

As the mosquitoes were most troublesome, and the heat was still great, we set off one morning in a little carriage, to buy mosquito curtains at Leghorn, to keep off these troublesome gnats. My wife and daughter left me to do their shopping, and arranged to meet me in an ironmonger's shop, in the Via Grande, at one o'clock. At that hour I was in the street, and saw them coming down on the other side. At the same moment I heard a most terrific noise, as if all the windows were breaking and houses falling, while women were shrieking, men shouting, and carriages were driven furiously along, all shouting out "alla piazza!" "What could it all mean?" I asked myself. Cries of "Il terremoto!" revealed the truth, and I rushed over to my wife and daughter as they were entering the shop, and saw the pots and pans swinging to and fro from the walls. I pulled them into the street, and hurried along to the great square, fortunately not far off, to be clear of falling houses. In the square we saw a thousand people on their knees. A beautiful and

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well-dressed lady in that position, close by me, was crying bitterly. There was a carriage for hire near me, the driver of which was on his knees weeping. I put my wife and child into it, mounted the box, and took the reins, when the driver jumped up by my side, and I gave them up to him, telling him to drive to Antignano. We had to pass round one side of the Duomo, the cross of which had just fallen with a crash. I told the driver, who looked like death, to drive on with speed beyond the houses.

As we passed along the road to Antignano, all the people were out of their homes on their knees praying, expecting another shock every moment. On our arrival at our abode, I found Harriet, our servant, standing outside the door, looking dreadfully pale. She described her fears when up in our bedroom "putting things straight." She felt herself giddy, and tottered about the room. The ornaments on the chimney-piece were falling down, and every person was in the direst alarm. From the large open green in front of our house we had a side view of the sea, and in front of the road to Leghorn, on which costermongers' waggons full of furni-

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ture were hurrying along to leave the city, and be clear of the houses. Over the sea, as far as the eye could reach, there was an immense range of black clouds, pierced by the most vivid forked lightning I ever saw, accompanied by rolling peals of thunder. I went immediately to the beach and procured a mast and a sail from one of the fishing-boats, with which I rigged out a tent on the green open space, and here we brought our mattresses, and made ourselves as snug as we could. Two Italian gentlemen, seeing this operation, went also to the beach, and procured spars and sails from the fishermen. No one dreamed of entering their homes for the night, lest a fresh shock should bring everything down on their heads. But it passed away without additional alarm.

About ten o'clock I went home to procure some necessaries, when something struck against the gable end of the house with a noise like that of a clap of thunder. The people all thought it the beginning of another earthquake. The two Italian gentlemen, thinking that I was gone in to lie down, kindly rushed into my house to warn me of my danger. I met them in the passage as

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they entered, and jumped down on to the landing, thinking with them that it was a fresh shock I had heard. This good-natured act of theirs was the means of our becoming good friends.

The next morning we ascertained that there had been a great destruction of property, not only in Leghorn, but in Pisa and elsewhere. In a village fourteen miles away nearly all the houses had fallen. In one place the earth had opened, and water had risen, covering a space of from fifty to sixty acres of land. It was long ere the effects of this shock were forgotten. The Grand Duke came round and visited the people, and did his utmost to alleviate their distress. I must confess that very uncomfortable fears and feelings crept over everyone; but the magnificence of that black, inky, leaden sky and clouds, lit up by the lightning, accompanied by the awful sounds of rolling thunder, seemed so truly to declare the great "I am,"—Jehovah Jirah—that I would not lose the recollection of the grandeur of that scene. I never read a word of all this in any English papers! But it is exactly what

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occurred, and seemed worthy of description.

Opposite to our residence is the island whence come the little sardines, sent to England in small flat tin boxes filled with olive oil.

My friend Mr. Birch arrived two days after the earthquake, and gave us a very ludicrous account of the effect in the large sulphur bath at Cassiano, where people walk about up to their necks in water in bathing costumes. About forty people were thus disporting at the time. The water became troubled, and they began to tumble about over one another in alarm. The cry of "Il Terremoto!" was raised as they scrambled out. Birch had just reached his hotel, and was going upstairs to his room to dress, when a fat English lady and her two daughters were descending. Mrs. Thomson—such was the lady's name—somehow missed her footing, and was pitched down headlong, falling against Mr. Birch's legs, and tripping him up, and they rolled down to the foot of the stairs together. The daughters began to scream, the servants rushed out of the house in terror, part of the roof fell in, and came down upon the table in the room where we used to reside and break-

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fast, and would certainly have crushed us to death. So we had every reason to be deeply thankful that we were safe. The hotel stood on a beautiful spot among the olive groves. No one was hurt by that hasty descent down a flight of stairs. It was very laughable to hear it recounted, but might have proved no joke to the unfortunate inmates of the hotel.

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CHAPTER XII.

Florence—The Brigands and the Dragoons—Scheme to rob the Diligence frustrated—Revolution of 1847—Flower Vendors—The Garda Nobile—The Grand Duke—Santa Trinità—Becca, the Flower-girl—In Sanctuary—Emeute in Paris—Pisa—Arrival of Austrian Troops—Hussar Bivouac—Shoes of the Austrian Soldiers—Last Look at the Mediterranean—The Duke of Clarence.

IN 1847, coming to England, I went into Norfolk, and rode over to Holkham to leave my card on the Lord-Lieutenant, the son of the late Mr. Coke, now raised to the peerage as Lord Leicester. He invited me there, and I stayed with him a few days, during which he arranged with me to bring the troops to Wells for permanent duty. I have related the meeting in Holkham Park, after the duty was over, and how kindly we were received.

I afterwards returned to Italy to my family, and spent the Winter at Florence. I met the lady who was so shocked at the origin of Cap-

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tain Hanchett's gold chain, and found her to be a most amusing person. We had capital apartments opposite the Palazzo Pitti, and attended the Court. How much enjoyment we here derived from the picture-galleries, &c., I cannot describe. I met also several old English friends. One gentleman, who had driven his carriage and four horses all the way from Calais, and who had passed over Mount Cenis, often drove us in the park at Florence.

I had occasion at one time to go over to Leghorn, having left a trunk there containing some things from my sister in Norfolk for my wife and daughter, which had to be got through the Custom-house. Leghorn, being a free port, everything came in without examination, but not so in going out; the douaniers were very vigilant, and examined everything that passed the gates for the country. I took our servant with me to put things in order, and remained one day at Leghorn, to get everything in readiness. The railway was only open from hence to Pistoia, and thence by diligence to Florence. On entering the carriage, no one but the servant and myself occupied the

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interior, but an English gentleman was on the outside. The carriage had four horses, driven in the English four-in-hand fashion, the first time I had seen this in Italy. The postilion generally rode the near horse, and drove the others with a long rein. When half-way between Pistoia and Florence, the Englishman called to me from above to take care of my purse, for there were brigands in sight. Looking out, I saw a wood on our right, and coming down a slope in front, were fourteen or fifteen men, all armed, calling out to our driver to stop. Two minutes after, I heard the clatter of horses' hoofs on the road, and then some shots fired, and looking out, I saw that three or four men, armed with long guns, evidently brigands, held the horses' heads. In another minute I saw five dragoons dash past, and a fight commenced between them, and more dragoons following, there was a complete *mêlée*. The maid did not seem at all alarmed, but told me all the news of the battle from her window, while I watched it from the other side. The driver would not proceed. The combat did not last long; the dragoons had the best of it with

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sword and carbine. I saw them riding about, and knocking over some of the brigands, who took to flight up the slope into the wood. My countryman came inside to me, and told me that it was a regular scheme to rob the diligence; that there was money in boxes in charge for the great bankers in Florence; that the brigands had been informed of it, and told to stop us; but the bankers, being aware that there was an intention in Florence on the part of certain parties to do this, had procured from the Government twenty dragoons to go to a certain spot on the road, where they arrived at the very moment of the attack, to save the booty, and escort us into Florence in safety. No doubt our driver was in league with the brigands, from whom we had no further molestation.

In 1847, there was a partial revolution in Florence, which broke out fully in 1848, as also in France and in other parts of Europe. The partial revolution in 1847 commenced in a curious way. The Florentines had, for a long time, been dissatisfied with the espionage exercised over their city. We had heard of the existing

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disaffection. Taking a drive one day, and paying visits, on passing near the Police Court not far from the Piazza Santa Trinità, we saw a great crowd and heard loud shouts, and our carriage was stopped. I stood up to discover the cause. The people had broken into the police office, had seized the books of the officers, and discovered who were the spies paid by the Government to give information of all that was occurring in the city, and of everything connected with political feeling in Tuscany. At the post-office, on going to obtain our letters, two fine young women with baskets of flowers would sell to you or present you with a little bouquet, and by that means they made it known that they owned a flower-shop, where ladies could purchase natural flowers for their dress or head, such as beautiful red and white camelias, &c. Becca, a fine girl, and very handsome, was the eldest, and Maria, more slightly made, was very pretty, and often would pin a bouquet to my coat, before I was aware of it, for the "signorina" (my daughter), as she said. They made a very good sale of their flowers, which were arranged with great taste, and sold at a cheap rate.

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Now who could imagine that these two fair damsels were political agents? Becca understood English and French well. She listened to all the conversation around her, and gave account of all she heard to the head of the police.

In the square of the Santa Trinità was a café, resorted to by all the fashionables for dinner, luncheon, &c., well served in every way. The master of this café and two of his waiters were also named on the list of those giving information to the police authorities. It soon became known to these worthies what had occurred, and they very wisely made off! That night we were at the Opera, and while enjoying the charming orchestra, the whole house was astounded in one moment by the shouts and yells of an infuriated mob. A gentleman whispered to me in French that the expected "émeute" had broken out, and that I had better get home, politely offering his assistance in leaving the Opera-house. The greatest consternation prevailed. People began to move off in all directions. No carriages were to be had. We walked on as fast as possible, our friend with us, till we reached the Ponte del Vecchio,

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when he whispered, "I must go no farther; do not stop anywhere!" In the middle of the way, across the "old bridge," stood six men, their shirt sleeves tucked up, stilettoes and swords in their hands, the most ruffianly-looking villains I ever saw, their heads bent forward, listening to the shouts advancing along the streets. My wife and daughter became alarmed at their ominous attitude and weapons, but I said, "Walk steadily on, speak not a word." I had one on each arm. The men eyed us as we passed on. Once over the bridge, a slight bend in the street hid us from their observation. "Now," I said, "they will not see us, come on fast!" I had feared to run before, as they would think I intended giving notice to the guard opposite the palace, our house being exactly opposite in front of the Garda Nobile; well so named, as all the officers were noblemen. Turning round as we reached our door to knock and ring, I looked towards the stables of the guard, and observed one of the officers outside the railing, listening. I pointed towards the street whence the sounds came, and he looked at me and bowed politely,

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signifying that he understood me. We got safely in and barred our doors, then ascended to our drawing-room window to listen also. On, on came those shouts and yells, and people running in great dread past the windows to get home. We stood behind the curtains so as not to be seen, and could perceive all that occurred. The mob came on, crying out, "A morte gli sbirri!" ("Death to the spies!") In front of the Grand Ducal Palace they pulled up. The guard took up their ground; the Garda Nobile mounted their horses, but none moved. A great cry for the Grand Duke was now raised. He appeared, standing on the balcony. Again the shouts of "Death to the spies!" were raised. The Duke spoke for a few minutes. It was impossible, at the distance of our position, to catch his words, but we heard the cry of "Bravo! bravo!" from his hearers, who retired from the palace, clapping their hands on their way. After this the night passed off quietly.

The following morning, my friend Captain Smyth called upon me, and we walked together to the post-office in the great square. Here a mob had assembled; but a regiment of infantry

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and another of cavalry were under arms, the latter apparently well dressed, and well mounted. We learnt that the people were determined to punish the spies. Three or four had already been consigned to prison for protection from the mob, which had threatened to break into their place of confinement, and the troops we now saw were placed there to prevent the execution of this daring threat.

We heard that an immense crowd had assembled in the square of the Santa Trinità, whither we speedily took our way. People running past us were all talking very fast as they ran. Captain Smyth told me all this clamour was concerning Becca, the flower-girl.

On arriving at the square, where stands the beautiful church of Santa Trinitá, the people were crowding in at the door. Smyth understood all that was said, and told me that Becca had "taken sanctuary" at the altar. We determined to go in, and see this wonderful thing, of which I had read so much in history and in novels. Resolved to keep together, I had hold of Smyth's arm. Dark were the looks and angry were the gestures of all the men, who are a fine, hand-

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some people. By degrees we forced our way up the middle aisle in front of the altar, to within ten yards of it. Here the dense crowd was massed together. There stood poor Becca as pale as marble, her fine black hair hanging over her shoulders. At that moment the scene would have formed a picture worthy of the painter's art. Becca's fine, well-proportioned figure stood out in relief like a statue in colours in front of the white marble, in her usual costume, blue edged with red, and the same on the bodice, in Swiss fashion, her petticoat never short, only just showing the blue stocking, and her neat shoe, with a bow on the instep. The people, with cruel gestures, were shaking their fists at her, and many had daggers in their hands; nevertheless, very little noise was made, and it struck me forcibly that, by advancing only within ten paces of the altar steps, they could have stabbed Becca to the heart, yet not a move was made to touch her "in sanctuary," and she calmly gazed on them in safety. It shows what a wonderful influence and control for good, or for evil, the Roman Faith, with fear

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of the priesthood and of their penance, &c., has had for centuries over its votaries among the people. In this case it was certainly for good. I could wish that our Protestant clergy possessed a more reverent hold of the minds of our people, particularly on those of the young.

Having watched Becca's calm countenance, such a contrast to those of her excited persecutors, we left the church, and took up a post of observation on the steps of the hotel opposite. There we waited for half an hour and more, and then saw coming down the street from the Duomo, a long procession, draped in black from head to foot, the eyes alone being visible. It was the society of the Misericordia, whose charitable regulation is "that whosoever joins it is bound to assist in any case of distress, night or day, whenever called upon." A certain number of strokes from the great bell of the Duomo, announces that services are required, and the covered basket for carrying sick or wounded is brought out. In the procession which we now saw, a long basket, covered with a black hood and curtains, was borne by six men, who had been sent for by some friend of the order, to come to the church to rescue Becca, and carry

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her to a place of safety. The moment she was placed in the bier-like berceau by the mute black bearers (not one of them speaks), the curtains were draw around her, and she was safe, not a hand was raised against her, nor was a word addressed to her by anyone. Becca was thus carried to the great prison and deposited there in safety. That she survived it all I am well aware, for, going to Florence a year and a half after, I found her plying her old pretty trade again, as vendor of flowers at the post-office. I bought a beautiful bouquet of her, and congratulated her upon the escape she had had at the church, telling her that I had seen her, and knew her.

"Ah! oui, Monsieur," she replied. "Je vous ai reconnu aussi."

How often have I remembered that scene in Florence! Everything passed quietly away, more so than was expected.

After the events just described, the Grand Duke gave a reception, attended by all the gentry, nobility, and persons of distinction residing in Florence. The English residents were presented by our own ambassador. With my

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wife and daughter, I attended the Court. Here we met my old friends, Lord and Lady Walsingham, among other English families travelling from Rome through Florence for England, and several English officers, both naval and military. Also, there were five or six officers of our yeomanry cavalry regiments in England, who, like myself, were travellers, and we all wore our respective uniforms. That of the Norfolk Yeomanry Cavalry was much admired, and certainly was extremely handsome.

Being the senior officer present, I was first introduced. The Grand Duke conversed much with me upon the subject of the yeomanry force of England, upon which I gave him all the necessary information regarding its formation. He expressed his own regret at not possessing such a force in Tuscany. After supper, he came and spoke to me again upon the matter. It was evident to me that he meditated some plan regarding defence, and I was right in forming the conjecture.

A few days afterwards, Signor F——, an officer of the Court, called to see me from the

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Grand Duke, who, he said, had been much impressed by his conversation with me regarding the volunteer English yeomanry cavalry, "and could I tell him their numerical force?" I explained to him that in nearly every county in England there existed yeomanry corps, greatly contributing to maintain peace, under the power of the Lord-Lieutenants and the civil magistracy. The Signor exclaimed—

"I would that we had such a force here! If it were possible to raise such in England, and to bring them here, would you undertake the command?"

I said, "I could procure for you officers and men, but not from entirely the same classes as ours. They are gentlemen and yeomen of the county, and could not leave their estates or their farms. You must have some of the same description of men here?"—upon which he shrugged his shoulders, looked at me, and smiled. "We," I continued, "have all true and loyal men in our force, and we are sure that, come what may, they will stand by the Crown and the institutions of their country."

"How many men could you obtain from England?" he asked.

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"A thousand, but not all of the classes composing our force, as I said. But I could obtain the officers and men, for whom you must give me good pay; and you must find their horses and the accoutrements, and I will be bound to deter any revolutionary mob from dictating, as on the other night they dared to do, to the Grand Duke."

"Ah, mon Dieu!"

Asking my permission to see me again, we then parted. We met again. The Grand Duke expressed his wish to give me the command of a body of men, composed half of Italians, half of English, and he would communicate further with me on my return to England, where I received letters through the Tuscan Ambassador in London (which letters I still retain) authorising me to commence gathering the force together, and to ascertain the expense of the accoutrements, &c., to all of which I attended.

But, the people rising, the Grand Duke was obliged to fly to Gaeta, where the Pope Pio Nono, in the disguise of a "laquais de place," joined him in 1848, and the whole plan fell to the ground. But, added to this, there

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were grave doubts if this good scheme could have been carried out with success, by reason of the strong feeling of aversion among the Italians to the Protestant faith, more particularly in the Court, which the Grand Duke had at first entirely overlooked.

In a subsequent conversation with the Signor, we talked the whole of this matter over. He expressed his regret at the thing having failed, for he felt certain that I should have proved of great service, with such a force, to the Duke.

"Yes," I said, "I feel pretty sure of it too, for we should have given the Livornese such a blistering with balls as would have sent *them* flying instead of the Grand Duke!"

There was much talk about changes in the Government, for the people were dissatisfied, revolutionary songs were sung continually in the streets, the people were offering to arm and march against the Austrians. The Grand Duke was doubly allied to the House of Austria; in fact, the Emperor was heir to the Duchy of Tuscany, which belonged to the house and lineage of Austria. It was not likely that the Grand Duke would

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listen to their cool demands. One of the songs which I heard at night concluded with a grand chorus of, "Viva Pio Nono! Viva la libertà! Viva l'Italia! Viva!" However, the Winter passed, and in the Spring of 1848 I left Florence by myself, and was joined at Leghorn by Captain Smyth of the Royal Navy, who was going to England to join a line-of-battle ship fitting out at Sheerness. We had not only a bad passage to Marseilles, but a miserable time steaming up the Rhone, and were nearly blown up by the boiler catching fire. We did not reach Lyons till five o'clock in the morning, just in time to catch the diligence for Paris. Arriving at Orleans, to our astonishment a large body of troops, both artillery and cavalry, was on the platform, starting for Paris. All the carriages of our train were crowded by officers and men, from whom we learnt that an *émeute* was expected, and that they were ordered to Paris, where we arrived at six o'clock, and went to a lodging with which my friend was acquainted. At eight o'clock Captain Smyth awoke me, begging that I would dress for breakfast, and saying that the sooner we could get away for England the better for us, as

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we might be stopped. "He had seen," he said, "a hundred thousand men marching past my window, and everyone on the alert, and barricades were forming!" A great crowd, too, was collecting. So it was fortunate we got away at two o'clock that afternoon for Calais.

We were in time to catch the steamboat for Dover, and were in London in the afternoon; a few days after Louis Philippe landed on the coast of Sussex. But as the history of that event is so well known, I shall not trouble my readers with it. The Revolution broke out everywhere—in Berlin, in Hungary, &c. We had our troubles at home. French people from Paris came over and worked hard to get up a "row" here. The great Chartist meeting on Kennington Common took place, but by the aid of the judicious measures of the Duke of Wellington evil results were prevented. Thousands of special constables were sworn in, and numbered off in different districts. Noblemen, gentlemen, servants, tradespeople, all came forward to a man. Never was shown a finer spirit, a greater determination to maintain order, and put down revolution than upon this occasion. The

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Chartist leader little knew the man with whom he had to deal. Troops were placed in every quarter of London. The mob came out, intending to march in in grand style, and have an *émeute*. I am told that the chief constable of police rode quietly up to the Chartist leader on Kennington Common, and whispered in his ear that, if he caused the mob which he had collected to make a move towards London for the purpose of a riot, he would be instantly shot. I do not vouch for the truth of this statement, but I believe it to be a fact. The passage of all the bridges across the Thames was stopped by troops, and the Chartists could only return in small groups at a time. Their whole scheme was a failure, for it was cleverly defeated.

I went into Norfolk to be ready to act with the yeomanry cavalry, should anything break out in Norwich, as was anticipated. I am proud to relate that the men whom I then had the honour to command, volunteered to assist the civil power in any part of England. This offer was communicated to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and was graciously replied to.

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I remained in England for several months, and then returned to my family in Italy, where I found everything in the greatest confusion. The Pope of Rome had fled to Gaeta di Molo, disguised as a laquais de place. The Grand Duke of Tuscany likewise had fled. Florence, Leghorn, and Pisa were in the hands of the rebels. I had much difficulty in returning to Italy. At Genoa our steamer was fired at by the rebels, who had got possession of the batteries. We remained in Pisa long enough to witness the arrival of 30,000 Austrian troops to reinstate the Grand Duke, and restore order. When I heard by chance that the Austrians were on the march to Pisa, and were within ten miles of it, I mounted a horse, and rode along the road by which I was told they were coming. It was not actually known in that city that they were so near. I fell in with the advanced guard of the Austrians, the Hussars and Light Infantry, the latter lying down in the olive groves. It was getting dark when I met them. I told the officer in command all about the position of the rebels occupying the gates, and advised him to push forward immediately. An hour

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before, when I had passed through, there were but fifty men armed, who had not the slightest idea of the approach of the Austrians. He thanked me, and sent off an officer to the rear, and I trotted back until I got within sight of the gate, when, walking my horse quietly in, I saw the guard sitting down smoking their pipes, and a more villainous set could not be seen, composed of a band of brigands and galley slaves from Leghorn; and these miserables had kept the people of Pisa in the greatest alarm.

I put up my horse, and walked to our house in the Via Grande. On my way I met the English clergyman, and told him quietly what was likely to happen. He seemed charmed with the news; but I entreated of him perfect silence, or the gates might be closed, and he and I might both be murdered. I fortunately found my wife and daughter at home. In an hour after, we heard shouts of the "I Tedeschi!" (the Germans). My friend the officer had possession of the gate with his Light Infantry and Hussars. The whole city was in an uproar, and I had the pleasure of witnessing the Light Infantry, in their green uniform, Tyrolese hats,

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and green feathers, entering into the town, looking round every corner.

These picturesque soldiers were followed by a squadron of Hussars, at the head of which I recognised the officer whom I had met and counselled on the road two hours before. These were followed by two pieces of cannon, and after them rode more Hussars and more infantry. The people began to put lights into their windows, and by degrees the whole city was lit up. Twenty thousand men marched in that night, some of whom bivouacked in the open space before the Duomo, others in different parts of the town. I saw an infantry regiment, two thousand strong, march into a church and pile their arms. There was great consternation among the inhabitants, although the whole march in was conducted in the most orderly and quiet manner I ever saw. The gonfaloniere (or mayor) and all the principal people came out like butterflies, and pretended to be excessively loyal to the Grand Duke.

I walked out to see the end of the drama. The Hussars attracted my attention, particularly their small but well-made horses. They were

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worth seeing. Their accoutrements were all in the most perfect order. I was much interested in watching them bivouac for the night, one man especially attracting my attention. They carried their corn and hay with them; a bag containing corn hung over the left wither of the horse, and a roll of hay, tied tight, on the right. The chain of the head-stall was fastened to a lamp-post, the corn-bag was put over his nose, the saddle taken from his back, the soldier undressed himself, took the corn-bag from his horse, littered down some hay for him, put the bag and the rest of the hay on the ground, and turned the saddle over on its back over it, so that no one could steal his provender. Then pulling his cloak and sheep-skin over him, his valise forming his pillow, he crept into the hollow of the saddle, his sword and carbine by his side, and in a few moments was fast asleep. I observed many go to rest in this way, and some slept on the door-steps of different houses. The infantry grouped round a camp-fire, all their feet towards it, the men lying close side by side.

The next morning the remainder of the army marched in, with the General in command, and his staff. They were all well mounted, and

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principally on English horses. I observed a great change in the inhabitants. The Civic Guard turned out in full dress and armed. Not one of these heroes had shown himself during the occupation of the town by the rebels. I particularly marked the marching of the infantry, nor did I discover a single man to be lame among the different regiments as they passed me. I became acquainted with several of their officers, among whom were many English gentlemen, and spoke to them on the subject. Their reply was—"We take more care of our men's feet than you do with yours in England. We do not allow them those shoes which lame your men on the march, and which, made by contract, seem to be all of one size, and the leather so hard that it cuts like a knife across the heels of your fine fellows."

I am grieved to say that I could not contradict this statement as to former days; but I believe that since that period, when our men suffered so much, this mismanagement in the clothing department of our Army no longer exists. Speaking to an English officer with whom I became acquainted on this subject, I remarked that none of his men were lame.

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"No," he said; "we have a man called a chiropodist to every battalion of infantry, and it is his business to look after the feet of the men and their shoes. No doubt you observed their shoes are high-lows, the higher part of thinner leather than the lower; therefore the heels are not cut as those of your men were during their campaigns."

There was a great stir throughout the city after the arrival of the General and his staff. The Mayor and municipal officers, and officers commanding the Civic Guard, were sent for, and desired, in forcible language, to bring forth all the Royal arms of the House of Austria, which had been pulled down by the rebels, and to cause them to be replaced immediately.

In Pisa, as I said, there was great consternation among these disloyal officials. It was apparent to all that the Austrian General did not contemplate their remaining inactive. Every person, in whatever position he might be, was desired to give up any arms of which he might be possessed, the Civic Guards alone retaining theirs, and they were ordered out on duty at the city gates, and desired to give notice of

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anyone whom they should recognise as having belonged to the rebels. This was a sore trial to those loyal subjects, who, had they in the first instance done their duty, would probably have prevented Pisa from falling into the hands of the Livornese rebels; but, like all cowards, they joined the mob.

There was a grand review in the forest of the Austrian troops, to show the people the force they had to contend with. It was quite charming to us Englishmen to see put *hors de combat* these crestfallen, evil-looking, disloyal fellows, who had for weeks been shouting out in the streets at night, making it hideous with their shouts of, "Viva, viva la libertà! Viva l'Italia!" I was much impressed with the quiet demeanour of the Austrians, who went about their duty in perfect order, and in silence, reminding me of my own countrymen.

The review was worth seeing. The Italians were in deadly fear of the Croats, whom they represented as cannibals who would eat children. It was most ridiculous to hear them talk, and when we laughed they looked furious. One morning ten thousand men marched out of Pisa

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towards Leghorn, which was summoned to surrender to the lawful Sovereign of Tuscany. The foolish people refused allegiance. The Austrians broke open the gates, and after exchanging a few shots, the rebels fled. Some were silly enough to take shelter in the Cathedral tower; forty or fifty men, ascending there unseen, waited till the troops had piled arms in the great square, and had placed sentries at different corners of the streets; then, everything being quiet, these cowards fired from their hiding-place, killed three or four men, and wounded several more. It was a cowardly transaction, and cost them their lives. They were dragged from the tower, and on my entering Leghorn with my English friend, we went to the great square, and found a number of troops collected there. Shortly after, an Austrian guard brought to the General in command these very men, who looked, for the most part, like brigands. There were a few lads of sixteen or eighteen—one, who appeared about seventeen years of age, was crying most bitterly. The officers examined all their hands and fingers; being near them, I saw the reason for this—to be convinced that the men had

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handled gunpowder. There was much talking among them, in the centre of a square of Austrian troops, but there was no escape for them. The result of the investigation was that they were marched off, under an officer's guard, to the ditch outside the ramparts, and there they were shot, as rebels to their sovereign and their country, and I cannot but say that they deserved their fate.

I returned to Pisa in the evening, thankful to get back without being shot at myself, for everyone was liable to that danger.

I think that I have now recounted all that I consider worth relating. The Austrians took possession of Florence. The Grand Duke was reinstated in his dominions. We went to Leghorn for the Summer, and in the Autumn we took a vettura to Genoa, whence, along the well-known route to Nice, a most charming drive we had, sleeping at comfortable hotels on our way, and I was sorry when the journey ended. The view up the Mediterranean, upon which I had so often sailed, with calm and gentle breezes, as well as in stormy gales, was indeed most beautiful. It was the last time I

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had the pleasure of looking upon that ocean, so full of the memories of "my youth."

Shortly after our arrival at Nice, I was seized with a dreadful attack of inflammation in my right eye, from which, under the bad management of the Italian doctors, I never recovered, and from that period to the present I have been totally blind. I have, in various ways, endeavoured to amuse myself, and have lately committed to paper the different circumstances of my life, since the period of my quitting the Navy in the year 1815.

I have often thought that, after having served my country for six long years in the Royal Navy, at a time when the most stirring events of the war were taking place, it would perhaps have been better for me had I remained in it, as Sir James Brisbane so earnestly urged upon me to do on our parting at Marseilles. He would have taken me on board any ship of which he had the command, as soon as I had got my lieutenancy, for which I had but to apply to obtain it. The Duke of Clarence, too, on whom I was appointed to attend in London and on board the *Royal Sovereign* yacht,

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in 1814, when the crowned heads came to England after the allies had entered Paris, on seeing me afterwards on guard at St. James's, said, in his good-natured way, "that he should take me up for being a deserter," and seemed grieved at the cause of my leaving the Navy; but I omitted to say that after the Duke had ascended the throne, he neither forgot me nor his little joke on my quitting the old service, for one day, as I was walking down Constitution Hill, His Majesty and Queen Adelaide drove past with an escort, coming from Windsor to Buckingham Palace. Directly I saw it was the Royal carriage, I "faced to the right," and took off my hat, upon which His Majesty, leaning forward, recognised me, and, smiling in his old good-humoured way, shook his fist at me, as much as to say, "I know you, you deserter!" which I perfectly understood to be the meaning of the King's good-natured recognition, and another proof to me, as I said before, of the truth of the remark that our Royal Family never forget a face once known to them. I feel quite sure that, had His Majesty lived to the period of my becoming blind, and I had laid

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the statement of the original cause of that misfortune before him, I should not only have received recognition of my services, but some kind provision for the loss I had sustained and have deplored for twenty-seven years.

Of one thing I am quite certain—that, had I not taken so deep an interest in politics, I should have been a richer man than I am, and that it would have been far better for me that I had never parted with the money I spent in assisting others. The history I have written of politics in Norfolk plainly demonstrates my services to have been earnestly required by the party to which I belonged, who left me when I could no longer serve the cause, some of them without even thanks.

I have lived for many years, and have carefully observed the different habits and manners of the people among whom I have resided, and it has oftentimes struck me, not only that there is a vast difference in the customs of the English from other peoples, but that there must be something more than the habits and natural industry of a race to give them the power which the British nation has obtained over the

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different parts of the globe. Just let my readers place before them the map of the world, and put their finger on Great Britain, and they will be struck with astonishment when they observe what a small spot it is upon the face of the map. Then just look at the possessions of this speck of land! I will name a few. Take a western direction from the British Isles, and you will find that we have the Dominion of Canada, British Columbia, the Fiji Islands, New Zealand, the Falkland Islands, British Guiana, Trinidad, the West India Islands which belong to Great Britain, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward's Islands, New Brunswick, Newfoundland. The very people of the United States, all, equally with the inhabitants of Great Britain, belong to the colonizing, the conquering Anglo-Saxon race.

Now turn your eyes to the east and south. We have Heligoland, Gibraltar, Malta, Gambia, the African Coast Settlements, St. Helena, the Cape of Good Hope, the South African Colonies, Mauritius, the Seychelles, Aden, British India, Ceylon, part of Burmah, the Strait Settlements, Labuan, Sarawak in

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Borneo, Australia, Tasmania, Hong-Kong, and other Chinese ports. Let my readers ask themselves if there is not something wonderful in all this; that so small a nation should hold such vast possessions? It is a strong proof to me that the hand of the Almighty Creator of the universe has been with us, and has prospered us through all difficulties. I have my thoughts upon this question, which has given rise to so much controversy among far more learned men than myself. We have been the means, by our carrying trade, of conveying also the Gospel of Truth to the remotest regions of the known world. I cannot but think that our instrumentality in this great work is a signal instance of the favour of providence towards our race and nation. Long may we continue to enjoy this glorious privilege!

If, in writing these pages, which I am now bringing to a close, I have in any way been the means of leading any of the youth of the present day to reflect upon the realities of life, and inducing them to avoid the snares into which every young person is liable to fall, and

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to which I myself have been exposed, I shall be satisfied that I have done some good service in recording my experiences. I am passing fast away to that bourne whence no traveller returns, and I may have spoken my mind more openly upon some subjects than, perhaps, prudence would warrant. For this, I must beg my readers to be indulgent to an octogenarian author. I am quite aware that I am open to the criticism of the reviewer, as are all writers who venture upon publication. I am also prepared for the ire of those who style themselves Liberals, which I am likely to draw upon myself for the remarks which I have made upon political subjects; but I have lived long enough to be assured that those who are called Liberals are no more liberal-minded than myself. Many of them who are clever and well educated men, having the power of speaking well, have mystified by a flow of words the minds of persons not so well informed, and who are readily led away by a cry which is got up for party purposes. These self-styled Liberals care little for the real good of the country, so long

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as they themselves can benefit in some way or other by the confusion which they create.

But I will ramble on no longer. I will end by expressing the conviction which I have gained by long experience and observation: that public life requires the same honesty of purpose, the same unselfish singleness of heart, that are so necessary to the faithful discharge of the duties of private life; and that the man who possesses these qualities will never prove himself either a bad citizen or a factious politician.

THE END.

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